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TIMES .10 MAGAZINE

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WILL IMPAIR YOUR JUDGEMENT
- A Healthy Attitude
- AIDS still kills



Times .10

Your Magazines of Choice

March 1998, Vol. 5 Number 6

David Sereda & Gala 98

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Politics

Pg's 6, 7, 24

Identity

Pg's 10, 12, 16

Fun

Pg's 20 & 22

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when I have no occasion."

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Your Magazine of Choice

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March '98
Edmonton, Alberta

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FYI: News & Notes from the HIV/AIDS Battlefront

"Perturbation of CD4 and CD8 T-Cell Repertoires During Progression to AIDS and Regulation of the CD4 Repertoire During Antiviral Therapy" Nature Medicine

French researchers investigated T-cell antigen receptor (TCR) reservoirs based on the varying lengths of the beta chain CDR3 hypervariable region in HIV-1 infection and after combination antiretroviral treatment. The researchers observed substantial restrictions in CD8 T-cell repertoire usage at all stages of natural progression, a phenomenon that continued into the first six months of therapy. Meanwhile, significant CD4 T-cell repertoire perturbations were not found in the early stages of infection, but correlated with disease progression. Normalization of the CD4 repertoire was seen in eight of 10 patients; in two cases, therapy was unsuccessful. According to the researchers, the findings suggest that "an efficient control of HIV replication may allow qualitative modifications of CD4 repertoire balance."

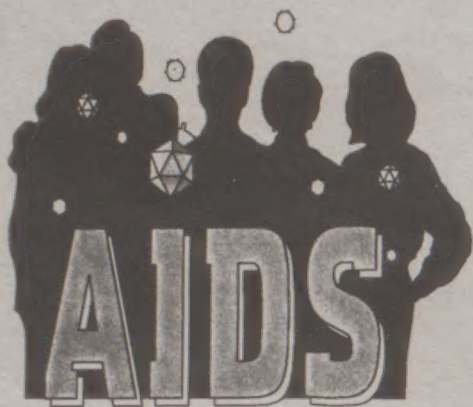
"Four-Drug Regimen Strong Against HIV" Reuters

A study of 57 HIV-positive volunteers found that a new four-drug combination of Nevirapine, indinavir, AZT, 3TC, or, in some cases, d4T, was effective in reducing the HIV levels of all the volunteers, including those who had received similar treatments in the past. Of the 18 volunteers who had never received HIV drugs, 16 experienced a decrease of HIV to undetectable levels after 24 weeks of treatment. Researchers also said that 86 percent of the patients who had used HIV drugs before had also experienced a drop in HIV to undetectable levels. Richard Beach, a participant in the research at Stratogen Health in Miami Beach, said that the new four-drug therapy was probably the most effective treatment available today. The researchers also tested the four-drug therapy on infants, but said it was not as effective in children younger than three months.

"Tainted Blood Scandal Could Be Worse Than Originally Thought" CNews Online

Quoting an unnamed senior official with Health Canada, Canadian Broadcast Corporation Radio reported Monday that the number of people infected with the hepatitis C virus through contaminated blood may be higher than expected. The report said that up to 90,000 individuals who have received blood transfusions from the Canadian Red Cross since 1980 might have been infected; original estimates by Justice Horace Krever had placed the number of infected people at 60,000. Mount Sinai Hospital's Dr. Victor Fienman says he agrees with the new estimate, noting that the original statistics counted only the number of HCV cases from 1986 to present. Fienman explained that about 3 percent of all blood transfusion recipients

contracted the disease through tainted blood between 1980 and 1986. The provinces and Ottawa are currently engaged in negotiations to determine a compensation plan for the HCV-infected individuals—a plan which could cost more than \$2 billion Canadian.



"State to Require Health Care Providers to Name HIV Victims" Postnet Online

Illinois Department of Health head John Lumpkin announced Wednesday that the state will institute mandatory name reporting for patients diagnosed with HIV. The state already requires name reporting for 60 other infectious diseases, including tuberculosis, syphilis, and gonorrhea. Although critics argue that mandatory name reporting could discourage people from getting tested for HIV, Lumpkin said that "we have carefully studied the issue of name reporting for two years and believe the time has come to treat HIV like other sexually transmitted diseases." The new requirement, which will take effect in 90 to 120 days, will also link HIV-positive individuals with health care services to ensure follow-up treatment. Illinois is the 31st U.S. state to require name reporting of HIV-infected individuals.

"Doctors Asked to Be More Aggressive in Herpes Screening" American Medical News

Experts are calling for increased screening of herpes following the release last year of a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study showing that one in five Americans over the age of 12 has genital herpes, and that many are unaware of their infection. Participants at a recent teleconference sponsored by the American Social Health Association (ASHA) noted that infection is lifelong and has many clinical and public health implications. ASHA, a nonprofit group devoted to stemming the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, estimated that the annual cost of diagnosing and treating herpes is more than \$75 million. The growing epidemic has been blamed, in part, on attitudes toward sex in the United States. ASHA head Linda L. Alexander noted: "It's ironic that we live in a very sexually explicit society, and yet in our society, we don't talk about personal protection, and we don't talk about the realities of infections that can be transmitted through sexual intercourse." Other factors that keep STDs from being addressed openly include the shame and stigma attached to the diseases, as well as the fact that STD screening is not routine.

"South Africa Says 1,500 People Infected With HIV Daily" Reuters

South African Health Minister Nkosazana Zuma announced Friday that approximately 1,500 people in the country are infected with HIV each day. Zuma told a parliamentary briefing that she is concerned about widespread ignorance

regarding HIV. Health Ministry spokesman Vincent Hlongwane estimated that some 2 million South Africans are unaware that they carry the virus and noted that Zuma planned to make HIV education her top priority. The United Nations HIV/AIDS program—which estimates that about 2.4 million persons out of South Africa's population of nearly 40 million is infected—said that the virus could reduce the average life expectancy in the country from 62 to 40 years by 2010.

"Renal Effects of HIV Protease Inhibitor Indinavir Investigated" Reuters Health Information Services

In the February issue of Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy, Dr. Kuang C. Yeh of Merck Research Laboratories and colleagues report that the protease inhibitor indinavir should be taken with water to lower the risk of nephrolithiasis. The researchers tested 28 healthy male volunteers, monitoring plasma and urine concentrations of indinavir. According to the results, indinavir concentrations increased greater than proportionally to the dose, suggesting nonlinear pharmacokinetics. The Merck group also investigated the effects of dietary intake on indinavir pharmacokinetics and found that high-fat meals may result in some precipitation of the drug.

"Ritonavir Effective in Treating HIV Patients, Study Finds" Nando Times Online

Patients with severe HIV infection can prevent AIDS progression using ritonavir therapy, according to Canadian and American

scientists. Dr. William Cameron of Ottawa General Hospital, Canada and colleagues report in The Lancet that combination drug treatment with zidovudine is safe, reduces the risk of AIDS-related complications, and extends survival time. The study examined more than 1,000 HIV-positive patients in Australia, Europe, and North America who received zidovudine or a placebo in addition to their existing therapy of dual nucleoside drugs. The results show that 21.9 percent of the patients receiving zidovudine died or developed AIDS in the yearlong trial compared to almost 38 percent of the placebo group.

"Lumbar Drainage Improves HIV-Related Cryptococcal Meningitis Mortality" Reuters Health Information Services

In the February 1st issue of the Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes and Human Retrovirology, researchers report that lumbar peritoneal shunts that help drain spinal fluid allow the successful alleviation of elevated intracranial pressure in HIV patients with cryptococcal meningitis. Dr. Richard D. Fessler of Wayne State University School of Medicine and colleagues placed lumbar drains in 10 patients. Eight of the patients had high intracranial pressure, so their drains were converted to shunts. After a median follow-up of 11.8 months, Fessler reports that all of the patients remained alive with pre-morbid levels of consciousness. The researchers concluded that aggressively lowering the intracranial pressure of patients co-infected with HIV and cryptococcal meningitis directly correlates with morbidity and mortality.



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MIND OVER FUNDAMENTALISM

by Cindy Eggert

Fundamentalism is taking a few knocks these days. A number of TV evangelists have gotten national media attention for actions in direct conflict with their statements of moral integrity. It would be unfair to point at Bakker as stereotypical of evangelists, but ever since the American evangelical movement began, those who follow a strict dogma have been questioned as well as praised.

Fundamentalism, as defined in Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, is "a recent movement in American Protestantism re-emphasizing as fundamental to Christianity belief in the inerrancy of the Scriptures, and Biblical miracles, especially the virgin birth and physical resurrection of Christ." This movement may seem abstract to thousands of moderate Christians, but a former devout fundamentalist said she believes there is a growing "insurgency" of fundamentalists in the United States.

Sherry Burgdorf of Minnesota has strong convictions about what she feels are "myths and layers of misinformation" in fundamentalist doctrines. Burgdorf was raised in a conservative Protestant religion that practiced fundamentalism. After high school she was told "that I was meant to go to a Christian college and teach in a parochial (Lutheran) elementary school."

She says she was entranced with the fundamentalist mindset in thought, word, and deed, and only in the last 10 years - the last third of her life - began to question the doctrine. "I don't know what it is like to be an alcoholic," she said, "but I do know what it is like to be addicted to the Bible. Religion controlled every aspect of my life, financially, socially, what I read, what music I listened to, everything."

Burgdorf is a quiet woman, slight in satire and rather unassuming when



talking. She said she has little of the zeal she projected when spreading the word of the Bible as a fundamentalist. Last week she sat with her feet tucked beneath her as she spoke of leaving the religion of her youth. "Then I became aware of various aspects (of the dogma) which were not worthy enough of worship," she said, "and I began to examine the anti-Semitism and anti-scholarly aspects of it."

Informed choice and critical examinations of the Bible are what Burgdorf resorted to because inconsistencies she found would have to be proved true or false. Burgdorf found documented in other texts and through her own research, concepts she could no longer ignore with blind faith, such as subjugation of females, original sin, and others.

She insists that fundamentalists, who follow the literal words of the Bible, can become militant, manipulative, self-centered, and extremist to the point where they can be compared with Middle East Islamic extremists who are dedicated to a militaristic, anti-female society. Harsh words from a woman who used to extol the inerrancy of the Bible.

And even as a former fundamentalist, Burgdorf said she can not dismiss some positive aspects of the faith, such as the love and charity of God and the importance of the Christian family. "Most fundamentalists are good, well-intentioned people with a devotion to God," Burgdorf said, "as I was myself."

But when these well-intentioned people take literal meanings from the Bible,

their practices can, in fact, turn evil, she said. She mentioned a literal interpretation from the book of Proverbs, Chapter 23, verses 13-14: "Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Though shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell." These verses can be found in many pieces of fundamentalist literature, Burgdorf said, and were

included in a pamphlet titled, "Correction and Discipline of Children." Burgdorf claims that documentation exists of children being beaten with rods, even to death, by parents following the words of Proverbs.

She also produced a Bible lesson for

nursery children which stated, "Indeed, a nuclear holocaust might well be the accompaniment of, and prelude to, 'the day of the Lord (Judgment Day)....'" Burgdorf said she can not believe these statements were once convictions she held without question and are still being taught to young children.

She said she also regrets raising her own children in such a narrow and constraining religion and for teaching other children as she did in a Lutheran elementary school and in Bible classes. "I don't know how many children I influenced and scared," she said. "As an ethical parent," Burgdorf said, "remaining silent does not conform to normal roles of accountability."

Burgdorf said she now believes in an amazing Creator but that belief is founded upon reason, truthfulness, fairness, and accountability.

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Capital City Politics



Klein Tories Protect Gun Owners' Rights but Not Human Rights

By Pam Barrett

Occasionally a bill comes along that says a lot about a government's priorities. The bill itself may not affect much, but its symbolic importance shines through to Albertans. This spring we have such a bill. It is called the Personal Property Bill of Rights. Its stated intention is to prevent government from seizing anyone's gun because it is banned under gun control legislation. It is the Gun Owners Bill of Rights.

I find it a very clear statement of this government's priorities. We get a bill enshrining the right of someone to own a weapon of destruction, but nowhere to be found is any kind of protection of gays and lesbians from discrimination. Gun rights, not human rights, rule the day in Alberta. And I find it very, very sad.

None of the readers of this magazine need reminding that Alberta is the last province in the country to refuse to amend the Human Rights Act to include sexual orientation. They have been dragged kicking and screaming to the Supreme Court and (hopefully) will have decency forced upon them by the judges. Yet, without a whimper from Albertans, they rush valiantly to the head of pack on gun owners' rights, leading the Calvary against that nasty federal gun control legislation.

Now, the Property Bill of Rights is so full of exemptions and exclusions as to be meaningless in any real sense. However, the symbolic point is loud and clear. People don't matter in Alberta.

**

Guns do.

**

A final budget note.

You might have noticed in the budget speech that the government is giving Albertans a tax break. Leave alone for the moment that it amounts to about 20 cents a day for the average Albertan. Leave alone that Albertans would rather see the crisis in health care and education fixed first.

What they forgot to tell you is that, like all things Tory, the Tory tax cut benefits the rich mostly. If you are earning \$20,000 a year and have two kids, your grand savings are \$20 a year. Earn \$60,000 and you get about \$120. Crank your income into six figures and suddenly anywhere from \$375 to \$550 will be back in your pocket.

The Tory Robin Hood. Give to the rich, steal from the poor.



VLTs Hurting Our Communities

By Grant Mitchell, Leader
Alberta Liberal Caucus

The Alberta Liberals have consistently advocated that VLTs (more appropriately called Video Slot Machines) should be banned from Alberta. Our position rests on the following arguments.

We are opposed to VLTs because they are a particularly dangerous form of gambling that is hurting families and communities in an unprecedented way. There is much evidence indicating that VLTs are highly addictive. In fact, Dr. Robert Hunter, a clinical psychologist who operates one of the largest gambling treatment centres in the world, has

indicated that VLTs are ten times as addictive as other forms of gambling. Alberta's five years of experience with VLTs confirms this. Gambling addiction has increased dramatically, VLT related crime is significant and lost homes, lost retirement savings, suicides and broken families have all been documented.

Some argue that this is a matter of individual choice and should not be limited by government. Given the highly addictive nature of these machines, the "choice" for many people is at least questionable. At the same time, societies like ours make choices all the time. It is reasonable for a society to assess that the social evil of these machines is far greater than any social good they might provide and that they should be banned. In fact, the government has tried to link the social evil of VLTs to the social good of community grants in an effort to justify its VLT policy.

However, VLT revenues are not required to fund support for churches, community groups and charities. The total amount of grants received by community organizations are less than the total revenues from other, non-addictive forms of gambling. Moreover, the level of community grant funding has remained largely unchanged since the early '90s, a time when VLTs didn't even exist, while VLT revenue has increased to over \$460 million.

In addition, communities only receive back by way of provincial grants only a very small proportion of the amount of money that goes to provincial general revenues from VLT gambling, back by way of provincial grants. The bulk of the money doesn't stay in those communities to buy food, and clothing and to support the range of businesses that often struggle to survive in smaller communities it goes into the government's coffers.

The Budget Speech made the point that personal and business taxes have been reduced by \$500 million dollars per year over the last four years. It's more than an interesting coincidence that VLT revenues have grown by the same amount. This has the affect of shifting taxes from wealthier segments of our society to much more vulnerable, often addicted, people in our society.

This raises the question of what is fair for each of us to do to others in our society. We answer that question by saying that nothing that is good, right and strong can be built upon taking advantage of vulnerable people.



Family Violence

By Laurie Blakeman - Liberal
MLA

As the Liberal critic for women's issues, I was pleased to take over the sponsorship of Alice Hanson's bill, The Domestic Abuse Act. My Bill received first reading in the last session of the Legislature and then died on the order paper. But it seems to have inspired the government to develop its own Bill, The Protection Against Family Violence Act. Several parts of this proposed legislation are laudable, including giving the claimant the exclusive occupation of the home, and directing a police officer to remove the respondent from the home. These measures will hopefully alleviate the need for shelters to turn women and their children away because of overcrowding. Another strong facet of the legislation is that the Court could make an order that would include a provision directing a peace officer to accompany a specified person to the residence to supervise the removal of personal belongings of the respondent in order to ensure the protection of the claimant.

I believe that the definition of family violence should not be limited to "bodily harm" as the Bill currently reads. The definition should be expanded to include financial and/or emotional abuse similar to the definition of abuse that as used in the Protection for Persons in Care Amendment Act, 1997. Further limiting is that a "claimant" as defined by this proposed Bill is, "a person claiming to have been subjected to family violence by the person's spouse." What about other people living in intimate domestic relationships, such as elderly parents or people living in same sex relationships? This government must stop excluding people living in same sex relationships from the benefit of legislation. Even in P.E.I. (the only other Canadian province to still exclude sexual orientation from protection under Human Rights law), their new family violence legislation

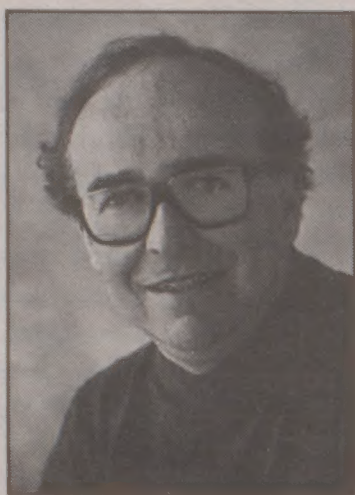
includes same sex couples in their definition.

A key factor of the original Liberal Bill, was that orders would be granted ex parte by specially designated Justices of the Peace. The current Bill would have police officers apply to the Provincial Court, where the Judges are not available 24 hours a day. I believe this could limit the effectiveness of the Bill because police officers may be unwilling to call a Provincial Court Judge at 3:00 a.m. I know I would be reluctant. It would make the Bill even more effective if as many avenues of reluctance or difficulty could be dispelled right at the start.

It is so important to make this legislation as effective as we are able. People who are suffering abuse at the hands of another individual, especially those who say the love them, need and deserve all the protection and preventive devices we can develop. I am committed to working with the government to make this the best legislation possible. Let's hope it gets passed during this sitting.

While the House is in session I'm at the Legislature Monday through Thursday (direct line 422-1371) and you will always find me in the

constituency office on Fridays. Please drop by, phone, or call for an appointment, 414-0743, email blakeman@oanet.com.



HURRAY FOR OUR MEDIA!

By Councillor Michael Phair

As another deadline approached to write an article for Times.10, the usual questions came up about both what to write and whether there is any value in writing and printing an article in a gay/les/bi publication at all? I always wonder if what I write is of interest to anyone and I know that the number of gay/les/bi people who read my articles is fairly small.

At heart of my thinking is the question of whether the gay/les/bi media plays a significant role in our community or is it just another attempt to set us apart. Certainly there are enough newspapers, magazines, radio and television news and media outlets to learn about what is happening in our world. Do magazines

like Times.10 contribute or are they 'fringe' publications that just 'whine', have their own 'special interest' agenda and not respected because they cannot compete with the 'People' magazines and 'Sun' newspapers of the world?

And then an incident happens and my skepticism disappears! I ask you to think about the coverage that the 'mainstream' media recently gave to the opening of a bathhouse on Jasper Ave. Let me instead quote for you part of an article on this same bathhouse which was written by a gay writer Neil Herland in the gay/les/bi paper XTRA! out of Toronto.

"The hot tub in Edmonton's new bathhouse is bubbling, but the city's gay community is ready to boil over. Critics say Edmonton's media invented a public controversy after learning about the opening of Down Under, the city's first full-service bathhouse in 17 years. And activists across the country are closely watching the situation, the latest in a series of 'sex panics'.

"Gay sexual spaces are under attack all over North America," says Queen's University historian Steven Maynard, who is studying public crusades against gay sex in Ontario. 'It doesn't surprise me to hear this is happening in Edmonton.'

"Coverage of the new bathhouse began in January, with reporters assuming it was the first since the AIDS crisis began. In fact, Edmonton was already home to a variety of commercial sex establishments, including an old men's bath and a number of peep show booths, both of which served as gay sex venues. Two traditional gay bathhouses were closed in 1981 (because of police harassment), several years before AIDS was even identified as a health concern....

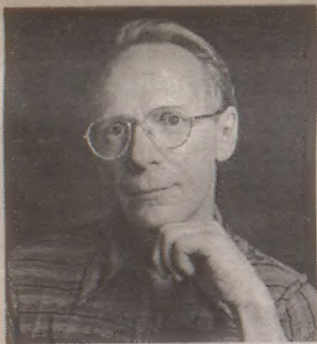
"The initial media stories focused on public health concerns. 'They were just trying to stir up the shit where there wasn't any,' says co-owner David Taylor...

"Reporters descended on nearby businesses and homes, asking residents how they felt about a gay sex club operating in their area. After being exposed to a steady dose of media titillation, most residents were horrified at the prospect of gay sex flowing through their neighbourhood. In fact, the bathhouse has an unmarked door and planned to operate as a concealed establishment...."

Neil Herland's reporting is the real story that you did not read in the regular media. His story talks about gay/les/bi Edmontonians being angry over the media hype, the failure to note that other similar venues exist and that there is a national context for what is happening as indicated by a University professor in Ontario!

So I say hurrah for Dennis Cambly and Times.10 and the other similar publications across the country, for gay/les/bi radio and television programmes, and for open writers that appear in such publications as Vue and See. Our media is important!

Michael Phair
Councillor, Ward 4
(If you have questions or concerns about the city, please contact
Councillor Phair's office at city hall.
496-8146 ph. 496-8113 fax.
E-mail mphair@gov.edmonton.ab.ca.)



From the Editor

by Dennis Cambly

at this point that all of the above mentioned are supportive and would stand by their "gay" friends. So why bother doing any more research on whether we are here or how many of us there are in our dear and richly affluent Alberta? Is it possible that we just are tired of the lies and wish they would just go away? Almost without thinking there appeared more questions than answers. We could not understand why such an affluent province could continue to pretend that we don't exist and ignore our wish for an equal playing field. Would they play politics with our lives? (tongue is stuck in cheek again :)

It is going on six years now that we in Edmonton, the Capital City of Alberta, have been sending our message out via Times.10. No, we are not flash and take great regard for the way volunteers spend countless hours publishing each issue. It is labour of love, not one driven by money or profit nor selfish greed. That is just the way we are here in Edmonton. For the most part we work together to cross promote each other and work together on fund-raisers for various causes within our community. Are we so bold that we take credit when it is not due? Do we really believe that our small alternative

newsmagazine is reaching every corner of our province? We know that that would be a lie and would not be so pretentious as to let our ego get in the way of the facts.

Is there a need for such a publication as Times.10? Our City Councillor Michael Phair points out that the need is great. If we were to believe the mainstream media we would still think that AIDS is something that only gay people get for being bad people. We are just a touch more intelligent in that department, and know that with over 30 million people worldwide now dying of AIDS only a very small fraction of that is made up of gays. With the total number now reaching 100 million HIV infections worldwide the percentage even becomes smaller. That does not mean that we should let our guard down and stop fighting for research money and assistance in the area of daily health care.

Prior to the fall of the Soviet dictatorship there were small underground newspapers printing the truth. Was it not wonderful to watch that great inhumane empire crumble? In any

regime there are always the small groups such as ours that continue to search for the truth and more than that, tell it! When love is on the run then there is a need for some group to stand and say "stop and think". Which opiate is your cure all? Mainstream media is full of sensational dribble to keep your mind off the truth. After all, would the truth sell tons of copies destined for the landfill sites? As our global village gets smaller so does the amount of real news. This is a quick way for mainstream media to avoid the facts and just give you short bits and pieces. Unfortunately we are seeing the same now appear in many of our own supposed "gay" publications. Go for the money, but lest you forget you cannot take it with you.

We know that often times our publication is a lot to digest, given the 10 seconds blips of news so many people have become accustomed too. Just think of it this way, we want to go deeper than they do, cause therein lies the truth. The truth is not fashionable, colourful or flashy but it is what it is: the truth. It's all in the new world.

As time goes by you will see that we're going to be free
.... Mike Pinder

We received an e-mail question from a person doing some research on the gay population of Alberta just the other day. When we speak of the gay population we use the word in the plural form which is inclusive of lesbians. After giving the question some thought we asked friends along the line what would be a "reasonable" number or percentage. Somewhere around five percent appeared to be the general consensus. That would put the number around 140,000 gay men and lesbians in our province. It is a healthy number considering the number would grow when you add in friends, parents and children of gay families. We are assuming

DAVID SEREDA: NO TAMAGOTCHI ARTIST, BUT A REAL LIVE SINGER

By Heather Marshall - Associate Editor

When I told some women friends that I was interviewing David Sereda, I got that look - you know, the one that says "I've never heard of the guy, so are you bragging or what?" If I had said Heather Bishop (that's next month, girls), Connie Kaldor or k.d. I would have received a more positive response, but David Sereda? As women we seem to have a pretty well defined group of women/lesbian singers we love to listen to and buy their CD's, but what about the guys? Do men only listen to disco?

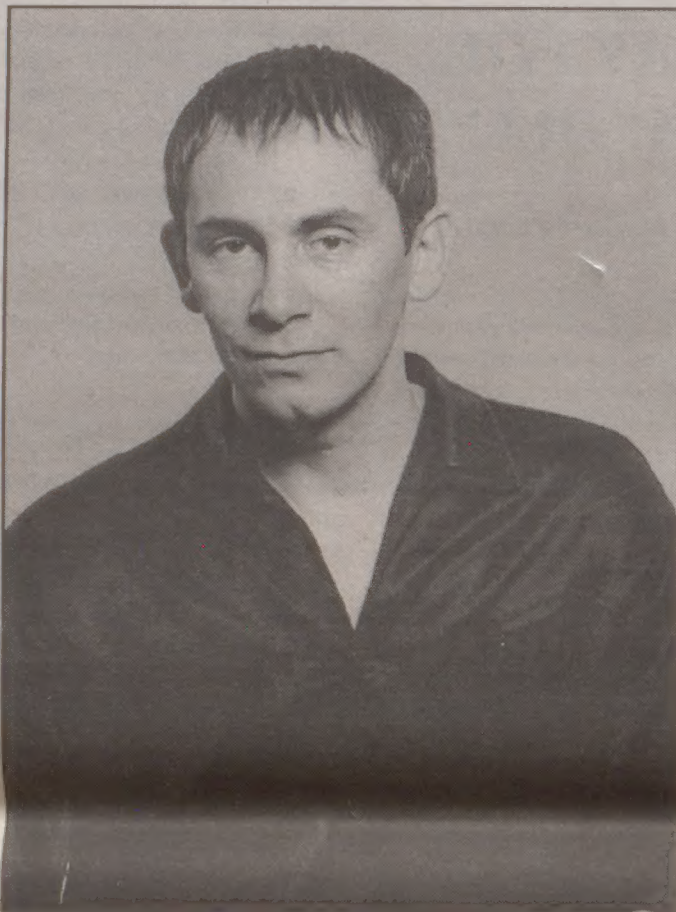
According to David Sereda he is not well known among gay or lesbian listeners. However he has been included with Leonard Cohen and Joni Mitchell as one of Canada's "intelligent romantic troubadours" (plus you can dance to *his* music). Listening to the richness and emotionality of his voice there is little doubt that this guy has a voice that could melt the iceberg that sank the Titanic, and that's just over the phone.

Edmonton born and raised, Sereda has taken his self-confessed Western Canadian sensibilities and moved to Toronto. There, as an independent artist and producer of his own CDs, he is making a successful career for himself.

"My upbringing in Edmonton gave me the attitude that things are possible - that you can break new ground and that you don't have to be afraid," says Sereda. "I was fortunate to have grown up in Alberta."

Sereda is excited about returning to Edmonton (a fairly frequent occurrence since he still has family here) to perform in the GALA '98 Choir Festival happening in May. He will be playing alongside Heather Bishop and Edmonton Vocal Minority, as well as doing some performances on his own. According to Sereda, the Festival has the potential to add gay positive feelings to the feelings in Alberta. "Music can communicate across barriers."

After attending theatre school in Vancouver, Sereda returned to Edmonton, hoping to develop a career in acting. Because he looked so young, he was forever being cast in roles as a teenager, something that didn't sit well with Sereda. Responding to the influences of Connie Kaldor, Heather Bishop and a



local group called "Fat Chants," Sereda finally came to realize that music can be both personal and evocative, and that being a singer/songwriter was really what he wanted to do. Not waiting around to be discovered, he decided to produce his own CD and he has remained independent ever since. "I just haven't found a 'fit' with a large recording company," he says.

Sereda's love for music is ever present in everything he says. "It is such a powerful force," he says. Even the music of the Olympics affects him. "People from all over the world were singing the same song," he says in reference to the opening ceremonies when five international choirs joined together to sing Bach's Ode to Joy. "This exemplifies what music can do; one song written by one person and sung by so many individuals - it is such a unifying statement."

Sereda sees music as a direct conduit to emotion, to the deeper, inner parts of the individual. "I try to create music that dives into the ear and heart of the listener. And I try to do that song by song. My goal is to explore feelings and emotions, using various styles and content. As a listener you fall into that moment and become connected with the singer or performer. The act of listening to music changes you."

So, back to the original question; why have so few of us heard of Sereda? Women songwriters have had the support of the feminist movement, as well as support from lesbians. These women have been writing and singing about things lesbians want to hear about. But, as Sereda says, there is no men's

equivalent to the Michigan Women's Festival. Interestingly, Sereda is an out gay man, but is not well-known in the gay community. "It just isn't the same kind of circuit [as women's], a cultivated audience, for someone like me," says Sereda. "I'm kind of 'cult,' on the edge. I am 'undiscovered' because my music isn't like pop music. I can't be exploited, or have as wide an audience," he says. It may also be that Sereda's music is difficult to categorize. He writes and performs music that is pop, jazz, gospel, hymns, doo-wop swing - all seamlessly held together with a voice that conveys a vast emotional scale.

In his last CD, *The Blue Guide*, Sereda sings songs about loving men, about leaving, and particularly about death. "I write about things around me, things that affect me," says Sereda. Death is something he has experienced closely; in 1988 his partner died of AIDS. "There was no way that I could not write about it, the loss of someone you love. The knowledge [of that experience] is a rite of passage - it is always with you," says Sereda. "In our culture we have not dealt with serious illness. We are so afraid of death. This experience which was very particular to me is something that someone with perhaps a different experience but the same *loss* can relate to. I want to give people strength through my music." His song "Powerful Love" is one of the places where he does that.

As an independent artist who doesn't have a big recording company behind him, Sereda must build an audience ear by ear, heart by heart. "Often gay/lesbian artists don't have as many doors open to them, but you have to support them so they can develop as artists and reveal the world to you," says Sereda. "We're not Tamagotchis, or 'virtual', but we're real people." And in fact Sereda has received the notice of real people. He has played all of the major Canadian Folk Festivals, opened for Joan Armatrading and Connie Kaldor, toured musical productions at Edmonton and Vancouver Fringe Festivals, been nominated for various awards, and has performed with such notable choirs as The Montreal Jubilation Choir and Toronto's Youth Outreach Mass Choir. Author Michael Ondaatje has noted that David Sereda sings like an angel and writes like a sinner. You can't get much higher praise than that.

You can hear David Sereda for yourself by attending the GALA Festival '98, May 15 - 18, 1998.

Contact the Artistic Director at 988-4620 for tickets or more information, or email: evm@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca.

The Window

A Thought Provoker

*** Thanks to Arun Sundar for contributing this piece! ***

Two men, both seriously ill, occupied the same hospital room. One man was allowed to sit up in his bed for an hour each afternoon to help drain the fluid from his lungs. His bed was next to the room's only window - a small and high window. The other man had to spend all his time flat on his back - all he could see out of the window was a patch of sky.

The men talked for hours on end. They spoke of their wives and families, their homes, their jobs, their involvement in the military service, where they had been on vacation. And very afternoon when the man in the bed by the window could sit up, he would pass the time by describing to his roommate all the things he could see outside the window. The man in the other bed began to live for those one-hour periods where his world would be broadened and enlivened by all the activity and color of the outside world.

The window overlooked a park with a lovely lake, the man said.

Ducks and swans played on the water while children sailed their model boats. Lovers walked arm in arm amid flowers of every color of the rainbow. Grand old trees graced the landscape, and a fine view of the city skyline could be seen in the distance. As the man by the window described all this in exquisite detail, the man on

the other side of the room would close his eyes and imagine the picturesque scene.

One warm afternoon the man by the window described a parade passing by. Although the other man couldn't hear the band, he could see it in his mind's eye as the gentleman by the window portrayed it with descriptive words. Unexpectedly, an alien thought entered his head: Why should he have all the pleasure of seeing everything while I never get to see anything?

It didn't seem fair. As the thought fermented the man felt ashamed at first. But as the days passed and he missed seeing more sights, his envy eroded into resentment and soon turned him sour. He began to brood and he found himself unable to sleep.

He should be by that window - that thought now controlled his life.

Late one night as he lay staring at the ceiling, the man by the window began to cough. He was choking on the fluid in his lungs. The other man watched in the dimly lit room as the struggling man by the window groped for the button to call for help. Listening from across the room he never moved never pushed his own button, which would have brought the nurse running. In less than five minutes the coughing and choking stopped, along with the sound of breathing.

Now there was only silence — deathly silence.

In the morning, the day nurse arrived to bring water

for their baths. When she found the lifeless body of the man by the window, she was saddened and called the hospital attendants to take it away — no fuss.

As soon as it seemed appropriate, the other man asked if he could be moved next to the window. The nurse was happy to make the switch, and after making sure he was comfortable, she left him alone.

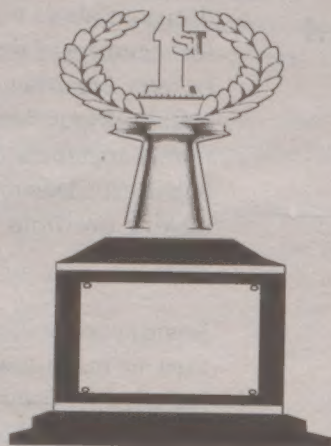
Slowly, painfully, he propped himself up on one elbow to take his first look. Finally, he would have the joy of seeing it all himself. He strained to slowly turn to look out the window beside the bed.

It faced a blank wall.

The moral of the story is: the pursuit of happiness is a matter of choice. It is a positive attitude we consciously choose to express. It is not a gift that gets

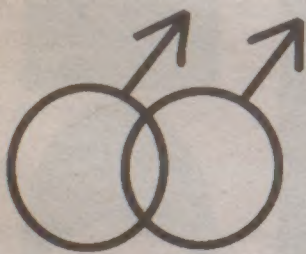
delivered to our doorstep each morning, nor does it come through the window. And I am certain that our circumstances are not the things that make us joyful. If we wait for them to get just right, we will never find lasting joy. The pursuit of happiness is an inward journey. Our minds are like programs, waiting for the code that will determine behaviour; like bank vaults awaiting our deposits. If we regularly deposit positive, encouraging, and uplifting thoughts, and if we bite our lips just before we begin to grumble and complain, and shoot down that seemingly harmless negative thought as it germinates, we'll find that we experience more of heaven on Earth here and now.

May you "see" with your heart and speak with love.



Harold Smith

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Julie Lloyd

Personal Directives Act

The Personal Directives Act came into force on December 1, 1997. This Act allows people to plan for a time when they may have lost the capacity to make decisions about their health care and personal care matters, by executing a document designed to come into effect only after one has lost the capacity to make such decisions for oneself. The Act complements the Enduring Power of Attorney Act, which empowers people to appoint someone to look after their financial matters if and when they might lose the capacity to do so.

In a Personal Directive, you can:

- Choose an Agent to make health care decisions for you;
- Choose an Agent to make other decisions about your personal care such as where you wish to live, whom you wish to live with and other personal matters;
- Identify the person or persons that you do not want to make such decisions;

-Set out more or less detailed instructions about your health care;

-Set out more or less detailed instructions about other personal care matters.

By executing a Personal Directive, you are able to avoid the expensive and intrusive necessity of having someone apply to the Courts to have a guardian put in place if it becomes necessary that someone be appointed to make decisions about matters of your personal care. Further, for members of the lesbian and gay community, it may be very important to appoint our own Agents so as to avoid a dispute between our partners and our biological family members over who should be included in the health care decision-making process, and who should be making decisions about other matters of our personal care.

Some people will prefer to merely appoint someone they trust to make any and all such decisions and not to include any specific instructions at all. It is important to ensure that you have discussed your wishes and beliefs with your Agent if you leave no specific instructions.

Others might prefer to include more specific instructions. You may want to include general health care instructions dealing with, for example, the kinds of life-extending measures you may or may not want to have administered if you become terminally ill and have no chance of returning to sentient life. Some people may want to have more detailed health care instruction, particularly if they have specific health problems. Such persons, for example, may want to leave specific instructions to deal with the health care crises that they are most likely to encounter. If one plans to leave specific instructions, it is a good idea to consult your doctor to ensure that the instructions are clear, and suit your best interests.

It is also possible to include specific wishes about other matters of personal care such as where you want to live and whom you live with. Vegetarians may want to include specific instruction about their nutritional requirements. You may want to include other specific

directions - a lesbian may instruct that she is never to be put in a polyester nightgown no matter how loopy she might get. A gay man might want to instruct that he is never (and he means NEVER) be clad in anything from K-Mart.

To be effective, a Personal Directive must be:

- In written form;
- Signed;
- Witnessed;
- Dated;
- Dated after December 1, 1997.

A Personal Directive can be revoked or changed at any time as long as you have the capacity to do so.

Once a Personal Directive is in place, health care service providers have a duty to locate the agent if they are of the opinion that you have lost the capacity to make decisions for yourself. It is therefore important that your doctors and any other of your health care providers be provided with a copy of the Personal Directive and with your Agent's address and telephone number.

Many of us have executed Living Wills or Advanced Health Care Directives. These documents have proven effective in directing our health care professionals and ensuring the participation of our same sex partners in the provision of our health care. Unfortunately, it appears that these documents will no longer be valid under the new legislation. The Act sets out that to be valid, a Personal Directive must be executed after December 1, 1997. Accordingly, documents such as Living Wills executed before that date would probably not be valid under the new legislation.



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Questions and Answers on Condom Effectiveness

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Update

1. How effective are latex condoms?

Laboratory studies show latex condoms are highly effective in preventing transmission of HIV (the virus that causes AIDS) and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). And real-life studies of "discordant" couples — that is, couples in which one person is infected with HIV and the other isn't — show the same thing.

Two recent large studies (DeVincenzi, et al. and Saracco, et al.) followed a combined total of 550 discordant couples. Among those who did not use condoms or did not use them every time, 11 percent of the uninfected partners became infected. But among the 294 couples reporting consistent condom use, only 1 percent became infected — none out of 123 couples in one study and three of 171 in the other. Neither study assessed whether the couples used condoms correctly, only whether they used them every time they had sex. For that reason, we cannot know the reason for those three infections. These studies show latex condoms are highly protective, and point to the need to promote consistent and correct use.

2. What does "consistently and correctly" mean?

Consistently means using a condom every time you have sex.

Correctly means following these steps:

- Use a condom every time you have sex — anal, oral, or vaginal. Be careful opening the condom package — your teeth or fingernails can tear the condom. Use water-based lubricants only. Oil-based lubricants, like petroleum jelly or lotions, will damage condoms. Store condoms in a cool, dry place, not in your pocket or the glove compartment of your car. Heat damages condoms. Use condoms before the expiration date on the box or individual package. Don't use a condom if it's sticky or torn.
- Put the condom on after the penis is erect and before it touches any part of your partner's mouth, anus, or vagina. If the penis is uncircumcised, pull the foreskin back before putting on the condom.
- To put the condom on, pinch the closed end so no air is trapped inside. Leave some room at the end for semen. Unroll it all the way down the penis.
- If the condom breaks or slips while you're having sex, stop, and put on a new condom. Be sure to follow the instructions. When condoms slip, break, or leak, it's usually

- not product failure — most times, it's user error.
- After ejaculation, withdraw from your partner before your penis becomes soft. Hold the condom on as you pull out so no semen is spilled. Be sure to properly dispose of used condoms (they shouldn't be flushed in a toilet) and don't reuse condoms.

3. Isn't it naïve to think people can use condoms consistently?

No. Studies of hundreds of couples show that consistent condom use is possible when people have the skills and motivation to do so (Hatcher). One of the biggest motivations in deciding to use any product — whether it's detergent or a condom — is the belief the product will work. Scientific studies have clearly demonstrated that condoms are highly effective in preventing HIV and other STD transmission. The majority of Americans know condoms work when they're used as intended. Almost 75 percent of people older than 18 believe condoms are effective in preventing HIV infection. People who believe a product will work are more likely to use it. That's why it's so important to correct misinformation about condoms. People who are skeptical about condoms aren't as likely to use them — but that doesn't mean they won't have sex. And unprotected sex puts them at risk for infection with HIV and other STDs.

In addition to believing the product will work (product efficacy), people have to believe they will be able to use the product correctly (self-efficacy). That's why it's important to teach people skills in using condoms, such as how to put them on the right way, as well as how to talk with sexual partners about condom use or to say no to sex if a partner refuses to use a condom.

4. What about the condom failure rate?

The term "condom failure rate" isn't very specific. Any assessment of condom effectiveness must distinguish between user effectiveness (or failure) and product effectiveness (or failure). "Condom failure rate" is often imprecisely used to refer to the percentage of women who become pregnant over the course of a year in which they reported using condoms as their primary method of birth control, even if they didn't use condoms every time they had sex. Research has shown that only 30-60 percent of

men who say they use condoms for contraception actually use them every time (CITE). Clearly, these statistics don't report condom failure but user failure.

At other times, "condom failure rate" refers to the percentage of condoms that break during laboratory stress tests — a measure of product failure. Or to refer to the number of couples who report that a condom broke or slipped (typically the result of user error, not product failure). The discordant couples studies cited in question 1 show that, used consistently, condoms are highly effective. Used inconsistently, condoms offer little more protection than when they're not used at all.

5. But one study (CITE) suggested that condoms have a contraceptive failure rate as high as 15.7 percent.

Unfortunately, many studies don't distinguish among consistent, inconsistent, and never users — making an accurate assessment of failure rates impossible. A condom can't work, if it isn't taken out of its package and used. And it can't work optimally if the user isn't skilled in using it.

6. What about microscopic holes in latex?

Latex condoms, which are regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as a medical device, must undergo stringent tests, including tests for microscopic holes, before they're sold. These tests are performed by the manufacturers. If any holes are found in sample condoms, the entire product batch is discarded.

Some people have incorrectly compared latex condoms with latex gloves, like the ones medical personnel use. But this is an apples and oranges comparison. Condoms are higher quality than gloves. They're made differently, to ensure greater barrier protection. Condoms are double-dipped in latex; gloves are only single-dipped. Condoms also under much more stringent quality control than gloves do.

7. How are condoms regulated and tested?

FDA regulates latex condoms as medical devices and governs their manufacture according to stringent national standards. Condoms made in the United States undergo strict quality testing throughout the manufacturing process. Before packaging, every condom is electronically tested for defects. If any defects are found, the entire product batch is thrown out. In addition,

Continued on page 22

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SPEAKING OF NORMAL

Liz Massiah, MSW, RSW
Clinical Social Worker

Male, Female, Neither, Both- lots of questions about what is a man, what is a woman, Ying, yang, boy, girl, butch, femme. Are we determined by our body parts, by our souls, by our name, by what??

What are the associations we make with power in our lives when we think of maleness and femaleness? A friend commented on someone she knows who became a male, and was astonished at the ease of access that became his simply because of his reformed identity as a male. He had heard about the differences in privilege that men have but experiencing it was quite another matter.

We struggle so not to be different, one from another, yet cling to those differences so tightly. Holding on to our differences tightly creates a strong sense of identity. And at the same time, sort of a moat mentality in which our difference can become the most important thing about us. As long as I only hang out with the safe folks on my side of the moat, then all will be well. Creates safety, security and isolation. Us-them.

Recently a conversation with someone from a twelve step program for men with problems with "sex addiction" reminded me of the struggle between having a name for what we experience and

disappearing into that name.

According to both sources, the goal of Sexaholics Anonymous is to be lust free, except in heterosexual marriage. No masturbation, no sexual thoughts, feelings, fantasies. The groups are separated by type of "addiction" - some groups for fantasies, some for sexual pleasure, some for men, some for women, some for sexual compulsives. In all, being lesbian or gay is seen as an addiction, and the belief is that we are all addicts. That if we are not acknowledging our addictions, we are in denial.

Without doubt, some people are troubled by the demands of their lust, seeking orgasms whenever and wherever they can.

They do this to the detriment of the rest of their lives. Why is doing this with same gendered people seen as an addiction, but with an opposite gendered person, not. One person told me that those who see the lust with same gender partners as an addiction also say same gender lust is most powerful lust they experience. No wonder folks fear us!

Sadness is my response to these ideas.

How can any of this help balance a soul and a spirit and a body? How can the joy of sexual connection, of pleasure from one's own body, be supported and celebrated within this context? How can one get to know the demands of

one's sexual selves in this context? What about noticing the times when one wants

to be sexual and how that plays out in your life? How much of you believes you are truly helpless within your body? That unless you have "x" orgasms a day, week, month, you are not all right within yourself- but that more than "x" is too many? Who maintains those notions, who helps the urges in a respectful manner? What would you notice if you were not occupied by this unrelenting force for sex? What messages within and without tease you into being enfeebled by these urges, and how can these messages be tricked into taking a short break? Or a longer break if they want?

The term, "sexual incontinence," makes more sense to me. It reflects the ordinariness of this bodily function, suggests that it simply is happening in an inconvenient way. People who are incontinent of urine are not seen as addicted to having wet underwear. They are not seen as flawed of character, they are seen as having a problem with part of their anatomy, needing support to incorporate helpful ways of managing their ordinary urge to piddle. Yes there are different types urinary incontinence. For some folks it is when coughing, sneezing or laughing, or the time between the message being sent and the bladder co-operating is too brief to find a toilet. There are lots of suggestions and solutions other than "don't piddle".

Looking for the absolute answer that defines the moat is attractive, but not always helpful. The differences and sameness' have their place and both need respect. Many will disagree with me and that is fine. Comments, suggestions are always welcome.



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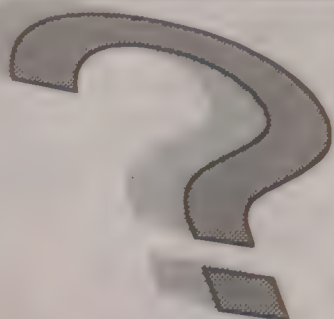
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Edmonton's Gay Community Support Groups and Services

AIDS Network of Edmonton Society

The Network retains its original operating philosophy: to provide support and education wherever it can be helpful in north central Alberta. AIDS Network of Edmonton works cooperatively with all those organizations in Alberta and across the country who are working to help limit the spread of HIV infection. Today the network provides Education, Info-Line, Speakers Bureau, Resource material and various Support groups. If you wish to know more about the Network call 488-5742

Affirm United

(United Church of Canada) meets at McDougall United Church 10025 101 St. Last Saturday of the month, at 7:30 - 9:30 PM For more info call: Larry at 429-4269 or Phyllis at 434-4808

Alcoholics Anonymous

A A is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. Call 424-5900 for times and places of Gay and Lesbian meetings.

AXIOS - Edmonton

AXIOS is an international organization of Eastern Orthodox and Eastern-Rite Catholic Gay and Lesbian Christians. Our mandate is to promote a greater understanding of human sexuality and spirituality within the Eastern Christian tradition. The AXIOS monthly newsletter is available via the Internet. Contact Dushan at 454-8449 for more information.

Bare Naked Boys Club of Edmonton - BNBCE

A naturalist group of gay men in Edmonton interested in social nudity. This is not a sex club. Men of all ages welcome. Call Fred at 469-7231 for information.

The B.E.A.R.S. of Edmonton

(A group for hairy men and their admirers) meet the last Friday of the month 9:00pm - 11:00pm at Boots n' Saddle. Or write us at #47, 10024-82nd Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6E 1Z3. Our email address is bears@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca

Brethren Mennonite Council

For Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual concerns. This is a support community for gay, lesbian and bisexual Mennonites and friends. Contact Tim at 454-1479 or Garrett at 423-1725 or e-mail: garrett.epp@ualberta.ca.

Dignity Edmonton

This Edmonton chapter is a support community for gay, lesbian Catholics and friends. Contact Bernard at 451-1794 or Dennis at 482-6845

Edmonton Prime Timers

Prime Timers is a social fraternity for older gay and bisexual men and their friends. The purpose of Prime Timers is to provide an opportunity for mature gay men to fraternize and join together in a program of social activities. Meetings held 2nd Sunday each month at the Unitarian Church at 3:00 p.m. If you would like more information address correspondence to Chairman, Edmonton Prime Timers, Suite 1093, 11444 - 119 Street, Edmonton, T5G 2X6. Contact Peter at 426-7019. E-

mail:mercury@planet.con.net

Edmonton Vocal Minority

A mixed voice chorus joining together in a common love of music and a desire to build a greater spirit of unity and pride in the lesbian community. If you are interested in singing with EVM or working in the areas of promotion, staging or front of house concerts and events, please contact us at P. O. Box 12091, Main Post Office, T5J 3L2 or telephone 988-4620. E-mail: evm@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca

Feather of Hope Aboriginal AIDS Prevention Society

The Feather of Hope was founded on a need to provide AIDS education and support to Native People in Alberta. Through education and the development of communities in partnership, it is hoped that the spread of AIDS will be lessened. We offer training and education programs, as well as support through traditional ways. Volunteers are very important to us, if you can help, or would simply like some more information call 488-5773

Free-To-Be Volleyball Association

We have 3 divisions: 1) Fun/Recreational - Wednesdays, 6:30-8:30 p.m.; No regular commitment needed: Now until end of June you can join anytime. Fee: \$10.00/year: Level: Beginners to Intermediate: Donnan School - 79 Ave & 87 Street. 2) Competitive - Tuesdays, 7-9:30 p.m.; Fee \$35/8 week period: Coaching & Games each night. 3) Beach - Day/time/cost TBA; June to September. For more Volleyball information call Ron at 428-3375.

Gay and Lesbian Community Centre of Edmonton (G.L.C.C.E.)

The centre contributes to the well-being of Edmonton's gay, lesbian and bisexual community through informational, social support services and its social information line. The services offered by the centre include an information line, telephone referrals, library, drop-in peer support counselling and social activities arranged and sponsored by the centre. Further information is available at 488-3234. E-Mail glcece@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca

Gaylines

A special telephone service is available. The intent of this line is to aid in the forming of a central information net that will aid all walks of life. Messages are outgoing only. The line is setup in a single location that will be permanent and will also be listed in the phone directory. It is free to all Alternative Lifestyles, Support groups, Clubs, Individuals and Businesses. Call 486-9661 to request your mailbox.

Gay Mens' Coffee Evenings

At 7:30 p.m. Breadstick Cafe at 10159 - 82 Avenue. This group fosters a safe, comfortable environment for all its participants. At the same time, it discourages attendance solely for sexual relations. Join us to relax, share experiences, and establish friendships. There is no age limit. Tel: 403-463-2098 (Graham) E-mail: gwatts@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca

Gay Men's Outreach Crew (G.M.O.C.)

G.M.O.C. is a peer education initiative for gay/bisexual men that works toward: preventing the spread of HIV amongst men who have sex with men, advocating for healthy lifestyle choices, and addressing social and health concerns by fostering self-esteem and gay positive attitudes. For information on G.M.O.C. workshops and other activities phone 488-5742, or call our Hotline at 988-3671.

Gay and Lesbian Awareness (G.A.L.A.)

We are an organization interested in human rights issues especially related to sexual orientation and changing Federal and Provincial legislation. We are always interested in new members. If you are interested call Murray Billet at 482-7421

Illusions Social Club

A social club for Crossdressers, Transsexuals and their supporters. Our main goal is to provide

a safe, discreet and friendly atmosphere where we can socialize as a group. We also provide information and peer support for members. We hold two socials each month, one on the second Thursday and one on the third Saturday. For more information write to Illusions Social Club, Box 33002, Glenwood P.O., Edmonton, AB, T5P 4V8; or phone either 488-3234 (GLCCE) on Tuesday evenings to talk to someone person to person or 486-9661 box 1 to leave a message.

Imperial Sovereign Court of the Wild Rose

The mission of the Court is to raise funds for charities and other organizations which either provide direct services to gay and lesbian individuals. Meetings of the Society are held monthly on the last Wednesday. For meeting location and time please see the Court notice boards in Boots and Saddle or the Roost. You may also call Gaylines at 486-9661 and press box 27. <http://www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/5904>

Interfaith Association on AIDS Edmonton

The purpose of this association is to sensitize local faith communities and their leaders to the unique spiritual and emotional needs of those infected by HIV/AIDS. The following faith communities are included: Anglican, Baha'i, Baptist, Beth Shalom Synagogue, Lutheran, Metropolitan Community Church, Roman Catholic, Temple Beth Ora, Ukrainian Catholic, Unitarian and United Churches. Phone 448-1768 for more information.

Lambda Christian Community Church

We are a non-denominational evangelical Christian church. One of our primary goals is to provide a safe and affirming environment for all who desire to worship God. Lambda Community Church, 11148-84 Avenue (Garneau United Church) Edmonton, T6G 0V8. Call 474-0753. Weekly Sunday service at 7 p. m.

Liaison Committee, The

In June of 1993 Edmonton Police Service and the Gay and Lesbian community for met a liaison to promote an atmosphere of understanding and mutual respect. For more info call Edmonton Police Service at 421-2277 or Murray Billet at 482-7421

Lipstick Lesbian Youth Peer Support

This is an organization intended to allow all femme lesbians and bisexuals the chance to meet and realize that they are not alone. Our goal is not to segregate the lesbian community, but to acknowledge that femmes do exist. This is an opportunity to meet and socialize with other femmes. Please call 988-4836 for more information.

Living Positive

Emotional, spiritual and psychological support is available through Living Positive to all those affected by HIV infection. We offer strong, loving, confidential support. We also meet weekly and share our mutual experiences. Living Positive is entirely directed by and for people who share a common diagnosis of HIV+. Peer counselling, hospital visits and a speakers bureau are also available through our society. Phone 488-5768

Lutherans Concerned: Edmonton

We are a spiritual community for lesbian, gay, bisexual and straight people. Lutherans Concerned gathers monthly for worship, sharing, and friendship. We offer individual support and a safe space for our own spiritual questions. Call Tim at 482-2294, or write P.O. Box 11095, Edmonton, AB, T5J 3K4 e-mail: luthcone@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca

Metropolitan Community Church of Edmonton (M.C.C.)

We are a local church within the denomination of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. Our major focus is to the defranchised of society. The UFMCC allows anyone to feel a part of the Christian Community and to claim our place in God's Universe. Services are open to all. We worship on Sunday evenings at 7:15 at McDougall United Church - South entrance. Please feel free to join us! Call 429-2321 for more information. E-mail:

Charles.Bidwell@UAlberta.Ca

Northern Chaps

Edmonton's Leather - Fetish club for Gay, Lesbian, and straight men and womyn was established six years ago. We strike to educate the rest of the community through workshops, staged demonstrations and events in order to heighten awareness. Northern chaps meets at Boots & Saddle on the first and third Friday of each month at 9 PM.

Northern Titans

Northern Titans International Bowling League meets every Saturday, at 5:00pm September to April, at Pins & Cues Bowling & Billiards Centre, Southeast corner of Westmount Shopping Centre, 111 Ave. & 135 St. For more information please call Gary Billet at (403) 454-8609 or Krystal -Seitner-Hager at (403) 489-1733.

Out and Out (O2)

An Outdoor and Recreation Group for Edmonton's Lesbian Gay Community and their friends. Membership is \$5.00 per calendar year. Free newsletter published bimonthly and available at local gay hangouts. O2 Hotline is 988-3132 for activity inf., who to contact, how to join etc. Get Involved - Have Fun - Meet New People.

OUTreach

OUTreach is a university-based organization for gays, lesbians and bisexuals interested in an academic atmosphere. Meetings are held every Tuesday at 5:00 p.m. on campus; main floor of the Athabasca hall. Topics vary from week to week. Additional information is available by calling 988-4166. E-mail: outreach@gpu.srv.ualberta.ca

PFLAG

Parents, Families, & Friends of Lesbians & Gays. PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual persons, their families and friends through support, education and advocacy. Meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of the month.. Newsletter editor Ellen at 465-3057. Outreach to speak confidentially to a PFLAG volunteer 944-1394, Voice Box 3524 (PFLAG) Mon-Thurs, 7-9:30 p.m. (Recording 24 hrs a day). E-mail: showrish@compusmart.ab.ca

S.O.L.O.

Social Organization for Lesbians Only is a group that gets together for fun and recreation. Lesbians over 18 are welcome to join in for weekend functions and entertainment. We combine friendship, companionship and support with singles and couples welcome. Call Linda at 447-4776 for more information

Team Edmonton

Team Edmonton - Gay Games Association is set up to provide an opportunity for person interested in participating in the Gay Games through fund raising. If you would like to be involved with Team Edmonton call 482-2789

The Youth Group

(Formerly Pink Triangle Youth of Edmonton) will continue to meet every Saturday at 8:00 p.m. at the Gay and Lesbian Community Centre Edmonton, Suite 103, 10612 - 124 Street. For more information or to give your input phone the Gay and Lesbian Community Centre at 488-3234.

Visions - Unitarian Church of Edmonton

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender discussion group. We meet the 4th Wednesday of the month. Call UCE at 454-8073 or Anita at 454-1992. Not necessarily Christian.

Womonspace

The purpose of Womonspace is to foster a positive Lesbian identity among the larger community and ourselves. We hold dances, produce a newsletter and hold other activities. For information call the Lesbian Life at 425-0511.

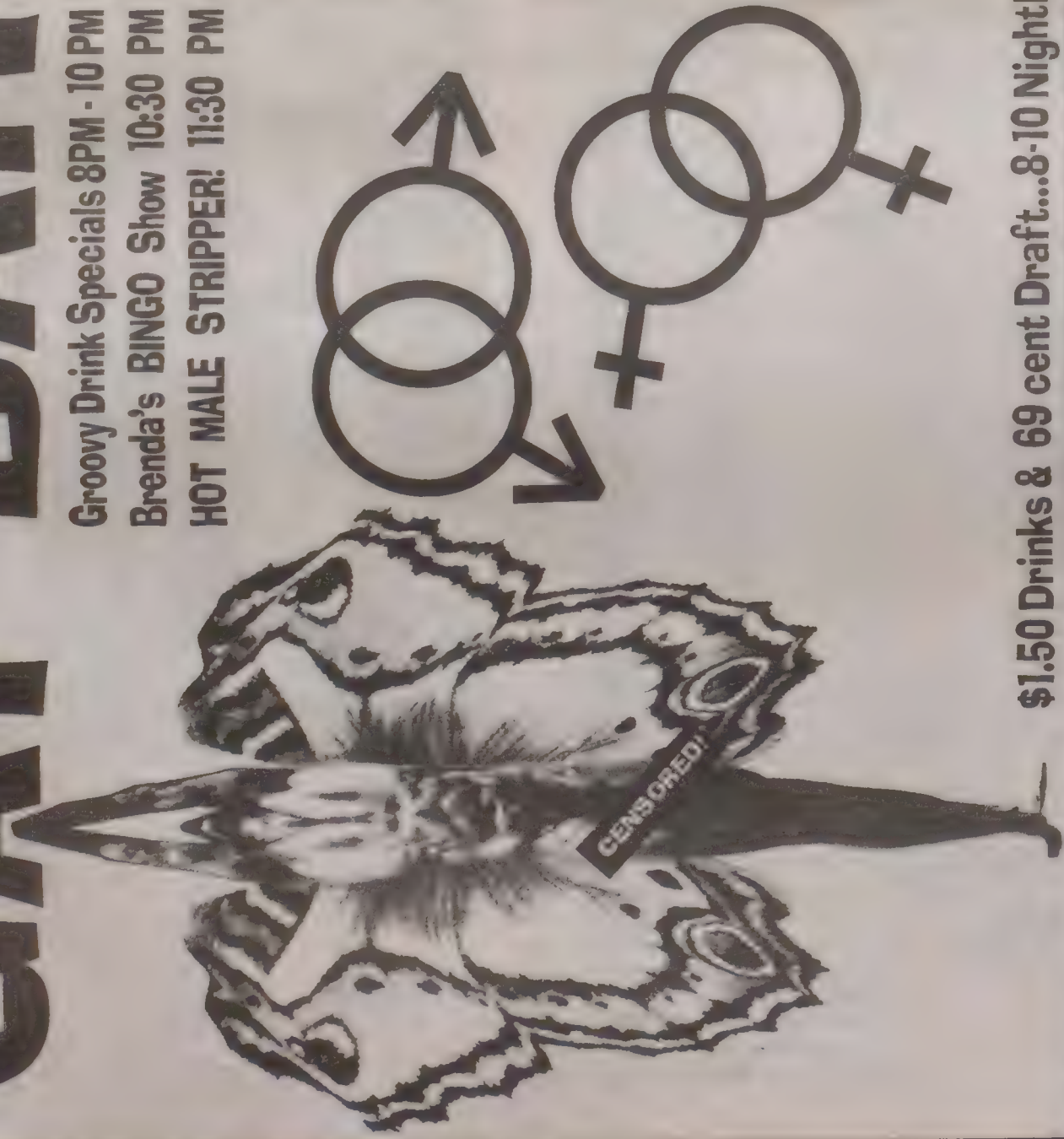
Thursday Nights...

GAY BAR

Groovy Drink Specials 8PM - 10 PM

Brenda's BINGO Show 10:30 PM

HOT MALE STRIPPER! 11:30 PM



\$1.50 Drinks & 69 cent Draft...8-10 Nightly

To expose, express, and experience life...Without prejudice.

109 DISCO

Fantasy & Fetish Dance Club 10045-109 Street 413-DISO

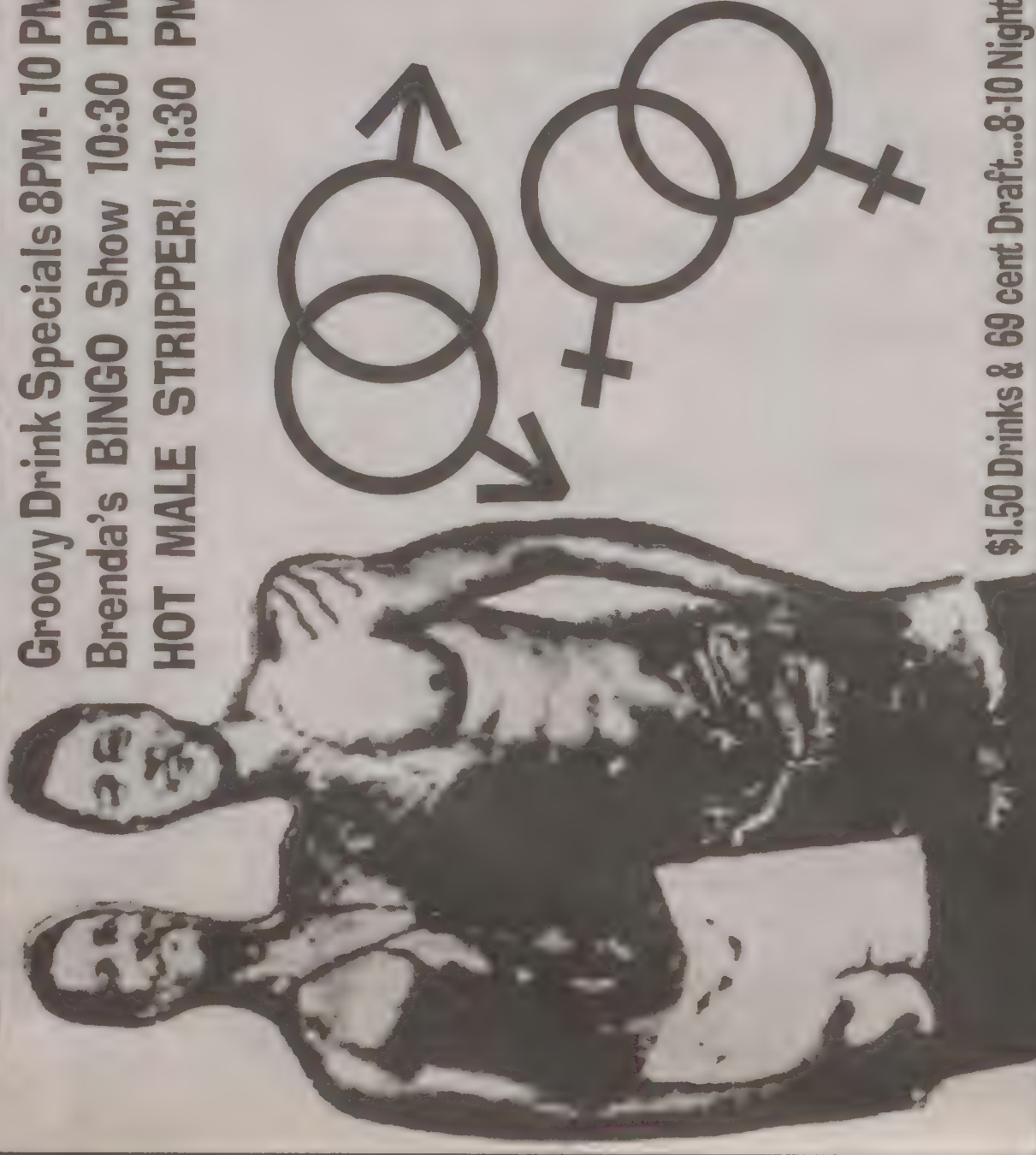
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Having A Little Problem Coming Out?

3 Stories to give you a boost....

Coming Out to My Wife

It has been 10 days since I "Came Out" to my wife. It was something that I had been considering for several months, but I was terrified that she'd leave me once she knew about the feelings I have for other guys. We've been happily married for 15 years, have a wonderful relationship, an excellent sex life, and two incredible children. So why rock the boat? Why not just carry on as before? I kept looking for examples of people who had done it and who had remained happily married.... But there weren't many.

Two weeks ago we went to see "Angels in America". Both of us were deeply moved and on the way home my wife began crying. I was sure that she related our own situation back to the show, but I kept quiet. She knows that on my business trips out of town I often go dancing at gay dance clubs (I've always said that it's because I can go and dance on my own without having to worry about finding a partner). She knows that I have many gay friends and business associates. I was convinced that she must know or suspect something. For the next few days I felt very uneasy.

Last Saturday night the two of us went to our favorite restaurant for dinner. We had a wonderful evening and we began talking about things about each other that irritated us. It all started innocently enough, but my wife mentioned that she got upset when I danced without my shirt on at one of the gay dance clubs that we go to quite often. She said that she didn't like the thought of guys looking at me. I told her that I did! I explained that seeing other goodlooking muscular guys turned me on, that initially I had been very confused about my sexuality, wondering whether I was "becoming" gay, but that in the last year I had realized that it was possible to have a dual attraction, and the fact that I was turned on by guys didn't mean I wasn't turned on by her - or for that matter, other attractive women.

Both of us ended up crying. Earlier in the day we had taken one of our sons to see the Names Project here in Houston, and now my wife sobbed that she didn't want to have to see my name on the Quilt - and then realizing the consequences added that she didn't want HER name on it either!! She told me that she knew that she couldn't stop me from being myself, but that if I was going to have sex with guys I should consider all the implications, especially AIDS. I promised that I would never indulge in unsafe sex....a promise that I intend to keep.

We talked the whole night.... and eventually fell asleep as the sun rose. All day Sunday there was a sense of tension in the air. We really didn't talk much about what we were thinking or feeling. On Sunday night our lovemaking was more passionate than I can ever remember. Afterwards we talked about what we could do. Ignore it and go on? Go for therapy? We both knew one thing: That we do not want to be apart. We wanted to find a way to make our marriage work, while acknowledging the fact that one of us is bisexual and the other is straight.

I asked if she had ever suspected anything. She told me that she hadn't, that she had always trusted me and I'd never given her cause not to trust me.

On Monday I went to one of the local gay bookstores and stocked up with books the deal with married men coming out to their wives. Both of us began reading. Both of us got very depressed. Not too many success stories. After a few days my wife stopped reading them...it was really getting way too heavy for her. I've continued reading, and I share the positive information with her.

I don't know what the future holds for us. I do know that at the moment we are much closer as a result of my honesty. Both of us are making an effort to LISTEN to one another; to take care of each other, and not take one another for granted. Hopefully we will find a way to both feel fulfilled. One thing we are doing is talking about our feelings. Spending more time on our own, without the kids or friends, just the two of us.

I thank G-d that the woman I fell in love with is as understanding as this. That, as the slogan goes, she can be straight without being narrow. We've always told our children that a person's sexual orientation was of no consequence to us...that we loved people regardless of whether they were straight or gay. The events of the last few days have proved the truth of that statement.

Unfortunately my brother and father aren't quite as "gay friendly" and I'm still dealing with how to tell them about the REAL me. They need to know, because once they realize that it's part of their family, perhaps they will become a little less homophobic.

The thought of coming out of the closet was so scary. The thought of remaining imprisoned in it was far worse. For me, it was the right thing to do.

Coming out later in life?

I finally came out to myself when I was 25-26, and to other people when I was about 27. To say that it's been a difficult, fear-filled process would be an understatement. As to why it took me so long - it seems most of the reasons have already been mentioned by others...

Firstly I was brought up as a Roman Catholic. I went to RC schools for all my school life. There was little taught about sex, and most of that was "naughty naughty stuff - wait 'til you're married" sorts of things. As such, I had little understanding of sexuality or sex, and had NO role models to speak of. The city I grew up in - Wollongong - is very working class and yobbo/macho. No poofers here! At least that's the way it seemed.

At the same time, when I was in High School, the other boys picked on me every day pretty much - verbal and physical harassment for years. They called me a poofers, even though I didn't quite really understand what it meant. All I knew was they got bashed (like I was) and killed, and that everyone thought they were disgusting perverts etc. The local media never helped - Wollongong is a working class town and all the local media ever wrote about homosexuals was stories where they could also include the word Pedophiles or Perverts in big headlines.

Just as my sexuality was starting to take hold

when I was 15, I came up with a grand scheme to do away with all these confusing emotions - I became VERY religious. You see - Catholic priests took vows of celibacy - and that was my answer. I was going to be a priest so I didn't have to discuss my sexuality at all! I also joined a pretty fundamentalist youth group - that didn't help much either. So, I hid it all away, deep deep away.

By the time I was 18, I was moving fast out of the religious phase - But University became my next vehicle of sublimation. Yes, I got my distinctions and high distinctions with veritable ease - I didn't have much else to think about. I learned Sign Language and within a year I was teaching and interpreting it - amazing. I didn't have much else to do. I masturbated like a jackhammer night after night about the men I met - but sort of assumed that when I reached an appropriate age that all of a sudden I would change. Ha!

Occasionally during Uni, I saw ads for the

Gay Soc. on campus. I thought about going and it turned me on so much that it scared me. I never went. That was for poofers and I wasn't one of them limp-wristed perverts! Seems that I learnt too well in High School! After I finished my undergrad degree and started on a Masters/job, I started to open up.

I started to get interested in Drama and writing. I started going to parties. I started experimenting sometimes with drugs, or different types of music. I even tried this 'sex thing' with a few women - but whenever they'd be trying to snog with me on their lounge, I'd secretly be eyeing off their male flatmates or brother or someone. Nope - that wasn't right for me. The longest I could hold a relationship together was about 3 weeks.

When I was 25, I met a gay man called Terry. He didn't try and bonk me, but he did talk openly and honestly about his life and what he liked to do with men. And I was astonished - and turned on like nothing ever before. He made me confront myself and think about it. Soon enough I could look in a mirror and face up to the fact that I probably was gay. But I was still very badly repressed. Yes, I was gay

Continued on page 18



Edmonton's Party with a Purpose

A fundraising effort in support of the AIDS Network of Edmonton Society

Featuring a silent auction, hors d'oeuvres, and performances by The Kit Kat Club and some of the most talented musicians.

a Black and White affair

Saturday
March 28, 7:30 p.m.
Francis Winspear Centre for Music 9720 - 102 Avenue

Tickets Available at Winspear: Box Office - Phone: 428-1414
or the AIDS Network - Phone: 488-5742 Tickets: \$25 in advance \$30 at the door

BEING GAY IS NOT A CRIME GAY BASHING IS



**EDMONTON
POLICE
SERVICE**

in cooperation with the Edmonton Gay and Lesbian Comm
to contact the Liason Committee, call 421-2277

GLCCE
(Gay & Lesbian
Community Centre)
Telephone 488-3234

PFLAG/T
(Parents, Friends of
Lesbians & Gays/Transgender)
Telephone 462-5958

Coming out?

Continued from page 16

- but was I going to do anything about it? No! Was I going to tell anyone else? No!

But then the bad times started. I went into months, years of depression over all of this hiding myself away. I was suicidal. I wouldn't talk to anyone. I ditched out of drama, and nearly lost my research job. I hid from most of my friends. I knew that I had to come out properly. Looking in the mirror wasn't enough. It was the mirror hanging on the inside of the closet door.

Sometimes it takes death to affirm the desire for life - and my uncle in New Zealand died. It was a very sad funeral and it got me to a lot of thinking as well. When my parents died, who was going to comfort me? When I die who is going to mourn me? I was 27 - it was time to start working on these hidden parts of my life. The next week I came back to the campus and there was an ad in the Uni newspaper for the campus gay group. I went along the very next day ... and as far as I am concerned the real coming out started there - when I was 27.

However, I've felt it difficult to get back into the life stream. The few relationships/boyfriends that I've tried haven't been particularly successful. Like others have said - I'm a mental adolescent trapped in a grown man's body. My psycho-sexuality had been stomped on and buried when I was 14 or 15. I've spent the last two years trying to undo all that damage. I'm trying to live with other people again, which is very difficult as I lived alone for 7 years. I'm trying to trust other people again - once again very difficult because I haven't even had an intimate/close friend for years and years - if truly ever! But I moved out of that flat in Wollongong and moved closer to the gay nightlife of Sydney, trying to leave the old ghosts of Wollongong behind for a while. I moved in with 4 other people - a shock to the system that's taken me the last 6 months to get used to again. I'm starting to assert myself again whereas I cared so little about myself before. I still have my bad days, but am surprised at the number of good days that are happening. I feel now, at the age of 29, that I could actually have enough self-confidence to start dating and doing all the other things that my friends did back when they were teenagers. I still feel bitter about all the lost time - although in some ways it was never lost. I've been quite the achiever over the years, in all but one area. Now its time to go and fix that!

There is, of course, much more to the whole thing than I can write in these paragraphs. A lot more reasons and influences and events that were significant. But hopefully this shows why I didn't come out when I was a teenager, or in my early 20s.

Hope this is of some help!

Stephen.

Thought I was dead at age 30

Hey, y'all.

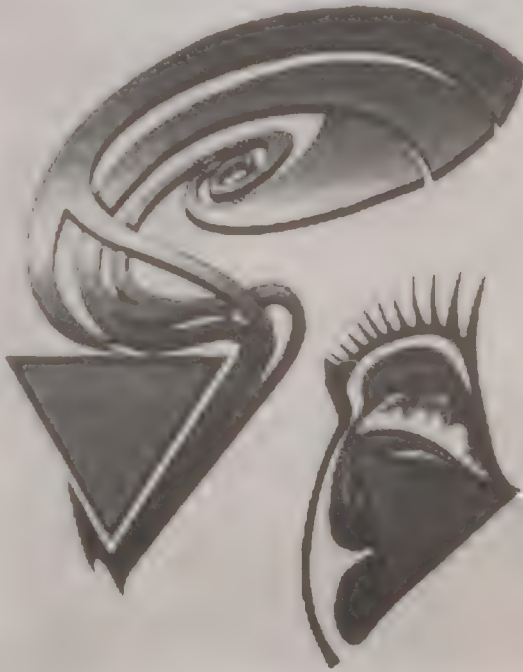
This has been a long time coming, and I figured that today was probably a more appropriate day to do this than any other.

I came out on Sunday, October 17, 1993 (having missed last year's NCOD by six days), at the age of 30, about two minutes after one of my very best friends came out to me. And it was about time, too. I had finally, after years of struggle, come to terms with my sexuality. In retrospect, I guess I had probably come out to myself as fully as I could by that point, although at the time, my only shrieking thought was that I was NOT ready for this!

A big part of my problems in dealing with this stemmed from extremely homophobic Catholic parents (more on that later). Nothing I ever felt seemed abnormal or unnatural to me, but whenever the subject came up from parents, peers and church, I heard nothing but hate and demonization. So, during the entire time that

I lived at home, my homosexuality was my "Dark Secret".

I lived at home all through college, until I was 20, and at one point even swore to myself that I would commit suicide if my parents ever found out. That's how bad I thought their reaction would be. I'm thankful that it never came to my having to make that decision, and I now question if I would have really seriously considered it had they found out about me. Still, I can't imagine what would have happened had they found out while I was still living at home and under their



control.

In order to keep them (and anyone else) from finding out, I simply put a wall around my sexuality. If I didn't practice it, if I kept what I knew "completely" to myself, they couldn't find out. When I finally moved away to go to graduate school, I still kept the wall up. I suppose I could have come out then (and sometimes wish I had), but I was still financially dependent on my parents. Even though I was 2000 miles away, my fear still kept me in the closet. The closet had become ... comfortable, familiar. It just became so easy to keep it up; I had been at it for so long that I had gotten very used to it, and it seemed to me that I could keep up the facade

without too much effort.

I wasn't lonely, because I had many terrific friends, and still do. But I was alone. And in the first couple of months after I came out, I had my period of anger about "wasted youth", and the fact that I let myself miss my twenties ... all those years of potential relationships and love (and yes, sex) lost because I was afraid to come out.

For so many years, from high school to graduate school and beyond, I had simply denied what I was feeling, even though I *knew* who and what I was, ever since I was a kid. It was probably 1989 or 1990 before I even began to come out to myself.

When I finally came out to myself, I told myself, "Well okay, I accept it ... but I'm 'never coming out. Ever.' This, of course, would doom me to a lifetime of loneliness. Or rather, being alone. For a long time, I had actually resigned myself that that would be the case.

So over the past four years or so, I gradually came out to myself more and more, and began to consider the possibility of one day, way down the line, coming out to someone else. There was so much along the way that helped me. I found some books and did a lot of reading. And there were little things, things that might sound trivial to some -- such as, for instance, Mark Slackmeyer, the Doonesbury character with whom I had always most closely identified, having come out in the strip. Another shaggy-haired, campus hell-raising, public radio guy! And I have to tell y'all ... perhaps the main thing that helped me come out was getting Usenet access and finding this newsgroup. It was a wonderful revelation, having the ability to read about others who have this in common with me -- for the most part happy, intelligent, educated, warm, witty people. I really needed to hear about real people, talking about their lives, their experiences, their comings out, both positive and negative, noting their reading recommendations.

Actually, when it happened, it was a big surprise. On that night, I was certainly *not* expecting that I would come out. It had been an altogether fantastic weekend. On Saturday the 16th I had a guest performer play on my radio show, a terrific folk/blues singer named Chris Smither. He was great, and we had tons of fun.

Continued on page 26

Julie C. Lloyd
Barrister and Solicitor

Has Moved!

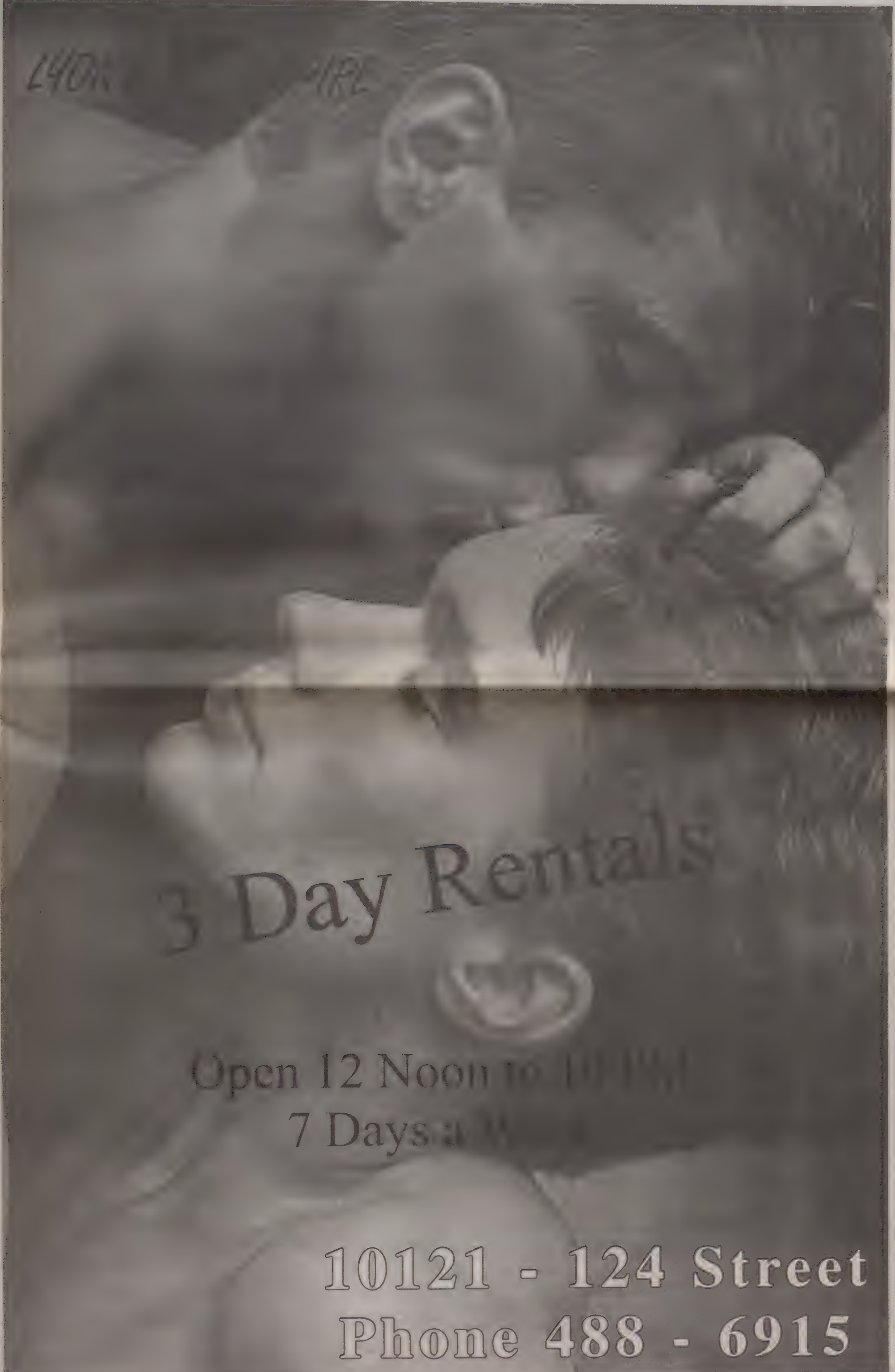
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fashion fix



by Clint Domskey

products.

I suggest very highly that you purchase what you need at the salon, not the drug or grocery store.

You will notice there is a fair gap in price, but there are good reasons for it. The quality in the salon line is sizably higher than what you'll find at say Shopper's Drug Mart. The better the quality, the healthier your hair. Salon products have ingredients, such as amino acids, that actually penetrate the cortex of the hair, thus conditioning inside and out. Check the ingredient list. You'll find the first thing is the primary ingredient. In inferior products, this is usually a filler like water that dilutes the mixture, lowering quality and production costs. (Cheap product, expensive water). As you get further down the list, the percentage of contribution gets lower and lower until you get to the last element- which is the component in the least amount. Some of the lesser grade goods don't have enough or any small principle ingredients that go further than the cuticle. The useless contents are usually replaced by, or used in conjunction with, wax. This cheap substitution does nothing substantial to condition the hair as it merely coats the cuticles, weighs down the hair, and appears to be healthier.

Of course it will shine;

Everyone wants to have shiny, beautiful, healthy hair- but not everyone knows how to take care of it. Everywhere you go you see products that seem to promise the same thing. They may help do what they claim to one extent or another, however wouldn't it be easier to find something that will do what you need to the full extent? Go to your hairdresser. Who knows your locks better? Tell them what you want to do with your hair, and ask what they suggest you purchase and how to use it. You will save yourself time and money instead of trying everything to see what works just to end up with a dresser full of dusty hair

on the other hand so does motor oil.

Another cheap substitution that degrades quality are ingredients like alcohol. Wood alcohol, found in drug store hair "care", is more drying than grain alcohol found in salon merchandize. With all these substitutions made by the manufacturers, The pH levels fluctuate wildly from one product to the next. Sometimes so high that they discolor metal, such as jewelry, dry out and damage the hair, and can numb the tear ducts. This last one is done on purpose in some shampoos so they don't sting the eyes (no-tear formula).

Always ask your stylist. They're knowledgeable and can help you acquire the hair you've always wanted. Be kind to your hair; it's an investment of time and money and is well worth it. Get regular hair cuts, massage the scalp to promote hair growth, don't be rough on you hair-

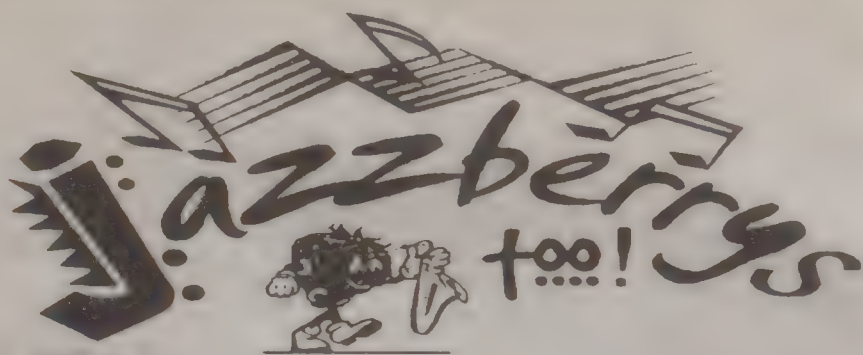
combing it alone can break it especially when it is wet,

and use your blow dryer as little as possible, if at all. Don't be fooled by the big salon names you can now find in the drug store. The manufacturer may be the same; however, the quality, just like other drug store stock, is not. Finally, avoid or at least cut down on hair products that can damage your hair. These include anything with alcohol, or acetone. These dry out your

hair no matter how high the quality.

Sun In is acidic, and anything acidic has a high pH and should be avoided-

Head and shoulders is one of them and has an added problem: Once you stop using it, the dandruff problem becomes worse than it was before product use. Hot Oil is full of wax that simply covers the cuticles to appear naturally soft, shiny, and healthier. There is a difference between healthy looking and genuinely healthy hair. **Take good care of your hair and show it off!**



MARCH 6 - OPEN POOL TOURNAMENT

(\$5.00 COVER) STARTS AT 8 PM

MARCH 21 - KARAOKE CONTEST - 8 PM

MARCH 27 - LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

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Thanks for the Great Website!

To Dennis and Heather, the editors:

A note to say that your paper's Dec/Jan 98 edition has got my creative energies flowing. I am a classical pianist/sometime composer teaching at Augustana University College, where my partner and I teach. Yes, Augustana is a private Christian liberal arts university a la Kings. However, unlike Kings, Augustana isn't into firing gays and lesbians (this is not to say that we haven't had to negotiate our lives carefully, however, but Lutherans tend to be more mainstream). Anyway, enough background. I want to thank you for putting the Canadian Jewish Congress's factum into your paper and I also want to thank you for putting the entire text on your website. I am embarking on a composition project for a "speaking pianist" which will (hopefully) include parts of the factum (I've performed a work which does this and uses the text that Oscar Wilde wrote from prison [De Profundis, by

American composer Frederic Rzewski]. It's also the subject of my doctoral dissertation, which tries to blend queer theory with this performance piece). Having followed and discussed the issue with Delwyn and been advised by the law firm which handled the court case on how to survive in Alberta in our jobs, I feel like this issue is so close to my bones that I have no choice. I think a composition would be an important marker in the history of my partner and I, the history of gays in Alberta, and the acquiescing role of Lutheranism in all of this (remember, we're talking German theology here—Luther the anti-Semite). So, there you go—your paper has been a wonderful resource for me, stimulator of ideas, and I'll let you know if I ever get something produced.

Best wishes, Milton

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Condom Effectiveness

Continued from page 11

FDA randomly tests both domestic and imported condoms to be sure they meet quality control standards. Samples representing millions of condoms have been tested, and the average batch tests better than 99.7 percent defect-free.

8. Some people believe some brands of condoms are more reliable than others. Do some condoms have higher quality standards?

All condoms are subjected to the same quality control standards. The studies published to date aren't adequate to judge the relative quality of various brands — various studies have ranked the same brand differently, because they used different methods to judge. Consumers should look for the word "latex" on the package. Latex condoms offer greater protection against HIV and other STDs than do natural membrane condoms. Color, shape, size, and other qualities (like ribbing) are personal preferences and don't affect reliability. All condoms labeled "For Disease Protection" are effective.

9. Can nonoxynol-9 prevent HIV infection?

We're not sure yet. Nonoxynol-9 is an effective spermicide, and it protects against STDs like gonorrhea and chlamydia. Laboratory studies show it also kills HIV in test tubes. Actual-use studies are underway worldwide to see if it decreases people's risk of HIV infection. One study has indicated that frequent use might cause vaginal irritation, weakening a woman's natural defenses against infection. But it isn't known whether this is true for less frequent use of nonoxynol-9.

10. Don't education programs about condoms make adolescents more sexually active?

No. Several studies have shown that sexual activity among young adults actually decreased, or at least stayed the same, after sex education programs that included

information about condoms. In a recent Swiss study of 16- to 19-year-olds, a sex education program did not increase either the level of sexual activity or the number of sex partners. Importantly, though, among those who were sexually active, condom use did increase.

A 1992 study reported in *Family Planning Perspectives* found the same thing — that AIDS education resulted in decreases in both the number of sex partners and sexual activity, but with increases in condom use among those who were sexually active.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has conducted comprehensive reviews of the scientific literature on sex and AIDS education. In 1993, at the IX International Conference on AIDS, WHO presented a review of 19 studies which considered the effect of sex education on reported age at first intercourse and on reported levels of sexual activity found several clear trends:

- There was no evidence of sex education leading to earlier or increased sexual activity in the young people who were exposed to it.
- In fact, six studies showed that sex education led either to a delay in the onset of sexual activity or to a decrease in overall sexual activity.
- Ten of the studies showed that education programs increased safer sex practices among young people who were already sexual active.

In addition to the evaluation of school-based education programs, the WHO report concluded that the two public information programs evaluated showed no effect on age at first intercourse and not increase in sexual activity in young people, despite a large increase in the use of condoms and contraception.

Later in 1993, WHO published a more extensive review of 35

studies dating back to the 1970s. The overwhelming majority of studies over time, despite various methodologies and country of study, found no evidence that sex education encourages sexual experimentation or increase activity. If any effect was observed, it was virtually always delayed sexual intercourse or increased effective use of contraceptives including condoms. There were two studies with findings that varied from these trends. While neither study can prove cause and effect, one study found that an "abstinence only" program increased the level of sexual activity in young people, and another study reported an association between sex education and increased sexual activity. However the latter study found that variables other than sex education may have related more strongly to the increase in sexual activity.

In September of 1995, the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) of the 103rd Congress examined the effectiveness of prevention programs and found no scientific evidence that curricula focusing only on abstinence delay the onset of sexual intercourse. The report further concludes that programs that include discussion of abstinence and contraception in combination with other topics such as resistance skills do not lead to earlier initiation of sex, and in fact, result in lowered incidence of sexual intercourse in some cases.

The OTA report further concluded that among individuals already sexually active, these programs lead to fewer sexual partners and greater use of contraception. This report underscores the need for comprehensive programs and a balance of prevention messages. (Thanks to Centre for Disease Control for the article)



A BLACK AND WHITE AFFAIR.

Edmonton's party with a purpose at the Francis Winspear Center for Music.
Saturday March 28th 1998

The affair to remember, our very own black and white affair, is going to be bigger and better than ever this year. Now on its 8th year, it has become a popular highlight on Edmonton's social calendar and this year is to be held at a very special venue: The Francis Winspear Center for Music.

We want all of you to be there and make the event the most successful ever. Mark the date in your calendar, Saturday March 28 starting at 7:30 pm.

Many of you know what to expect, but for those who don't, Edmonton's party with a purpose is a fabulous event——great music, plenty of dancing, performances by great live bands.

Entertainers this year include bands Painting Daisies and the Kit Kat club, along with designers, jazz pianists, Celtic harpist, a caricaturist and many pocket entertainers. There is also a creative silent auction, Lola's Martini Bar - a Martini lounge, hors d'oeuvres supplied by the finest restaurant kitchens in town and our very own balloon burst.

Dress creatively in black and white, see and be seen!

The venue The Winspear Center is a great venue, opened in the fall of 1997. The Winspear Center has distinguished itself as one of the top centers for the performing arts in Alberta and indeed Canada. Already a host of popular and international artists have performed at the Winspear Center. We are fortunate to have the Winspear Center as our official partner for the event. The affair will be held on three levels of the lobby.

Come along.
Tickets for A Black and White Affair are \$25 in advance and \$30 at the door. Tickets go on sale to the public after February 5th and are available through the AIDS Network office, in person at #201, 11456 Jasper Ave, or phone 488-5742, or direct from the Winspear Center Box Office - Phone- 428-1414

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News From GLCCE



What Does the Future Hold:

The Centre has come a long way forward in the last two years. We plan to continue to improve and expand our current activities. We need more volunteers, and more money. We also NEED more community input of ideas and comment. We believe that our biggest problem is that, we feel there are a lot of people in the Edmonton area that need our services but are either too scared to contact us or totally unaware that we exist.

Annual General Meeting:

Please note that the Annual General Meeting for the Centre will be held at the Centre on Thursday, April 16, 1998. Everyone, members and non-members are encouraged to attend.

Support and Participation:

There are many dedicated volunteers working to make things happen in our community and at the Centre. Many people support the Centre by being members. Many people participate in our "Centre Renter" program. This program gives busy people, who believe in the Centre but do not have time to contribute, an opportunity to contribute by donating money either in a lump sum or on a monthly basis to help pay the rent. This allows other volunteers to devote their time and energy to our programs instead of fund raising activities.

Charitable Status:

Two years ago, when I became involved with the Centre, everyone expended a lot of energy to rebuild all aspects of the Centre. We were very aware that long term viability and growth of the Centre and its programs depended on the issue of charitable status. We were very careful to make sure all details of our application to Revenue Canada were in order. This took a lot of time and energy. Our application was received by Revenue Canada in September 1997, and anything to do with the government takes time. It would be great if by the time you read this, we have our charitable status. However, it will probably take at least a few more months. Charitable status means that we will be able to issue tax receipts that can be used at income tax time. Anyone who has funds that could be donated anywhere have astute business minds and tax receipts are very important.

Public Relations and Speakers:

Our community continues to receive an increasing demand to provide speakers, program facilitators and conference representatives for a wide range of speaking engagements and venues throughout the greater Edmonton area and beyond. Therefore we are immediately seeking volunteers who are comfortable in one or more of these roles or who have a genuine interest in getting proactively involved in a diverse range of community initiatives. You are gay positive, ideally a team player and are motivated to speaking to, and or addressing issues and concerns relevant to the community at large. Volunteers will be equipped to attend meetings on a periodic basis, and as well, will be encouraged to participate in relevant professional development seminars from time to time. Please contact the Centre as soon as possible.

Peer Counselling and Library Services:

A major program at the Centre is our peer counselling service. This is a free service available to anyone without appointments either by phone or by visiting the Centre. Our counsellors are community members who have taken our 8 week course. They are "Peer" not "Professional" counsellors that can be very helpful to anyone who needs to talk about things. Our library has a large number of reference books, fiction books and magazines. We also have a large number of information pamphlets and current publications available.

Youth Group:

"The Youth Group" has been meeting every Saturday starting at 8:00 p.m. at the Centre since October 1997. This group is being well attended and is an excellent opportunity for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered youth to meet and socialize. This group is also growing and changing and is seeking direction from youth, not adults, so it can better meet the needs of the Youth of Edmonton. For more information call the Centre.

Support Groups:

The Centre is again co-operating with the Gay Men's Outreach Crew of the AIDS Network and offering free educational and support workshops which are facilitated discussion groups. "Coming Out in the '90's" started January 28. "Being Gay in the '90's" is to start on March 18. These workshops involve a commitment of time to attend from 7 to 10 p.m. on Wednesdays for 6 & 8 weeks, respectively and are held at St. Stephen's College on the U of A

campus. "Talking Together" is a facilitated discussion evening from 7 to 9 p.m. every Sunday evening on a drop-in when you can basis at the Centre. For more information call GMOC at 944-1394 ext. 4662 or the Centre. There is also a Gay Men's Wednesday Coffee Evening every week starting at 7:30 p.m. at the Breadstick Cafe (10159-82 Avenue). Call Graham at 463-2098 for more information.

For women, there is a workshop called, "Coming Out in the '90's" which started on Wednesday, February 11 and will go for 8 weeks at the Centre. There is also a Women's Wednesday Coffee Evening every week at Jazzberry's Too Cafe (10116-124 Street). Call Kerry at 991-7834 for more information.

Internet Web Page:

Our web page is continuing to grow with more information and links and a large number of people are looking at it. We are now updating the web page at least once a week. A major part of the page is the community calendar, and it has to be current to be of any use. To help the Centre with our web page, we need everyone who is planning any events to contact us so we can be put it on the page for everyone to see. Around the first and the middle of the month we send the community calendar out to anyone on our email distribution list. If anyone has any ideas or information or wants to be on the distribution list, then do contact the Centre.

Pride Week:

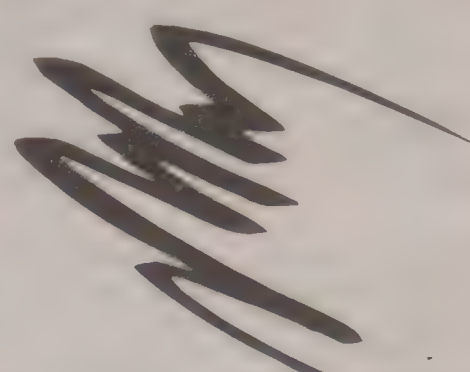
Pride Week for 1998 is from May 16 to 23. The GALA Choral Festival is being held on Victoria Day

Weekend. There will be Gay and Lesbian Choirs from all over Canada and elsewhere. The visitors to our city will probably number in the thousands. On Saturday afternoon, May 16, everyone in Edmonton can join all our visitors in the biggest ever Pride Celebration in Churchill Square. There will be no Parade but there will be lots of room for booths and displays in the square. With no parade there is no need for traffic control by the Police or the City which cost thousands of dollars last year. Also, if the weather is unpleasant, we can move everything into City Hall at a moments notice. The following Saturday, the Centre and Womonspace will hold their annual Pride Dance in the Bus Barns in old Strathcona. Everyone with any ideas or plans for Pride Week is encouraged to contact the Centre.

How to contact the Centre:

The Gay and Lesbian Community Centre of Edmonton is open for drop-in and phone service from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., Monday through Friday except holidays. Location address is- Suite 103, 10612-124 Street. Telephone number is- 488-3234, and all messages are returned. Mailing Address is- Box 1852, Main Post Office, Edmonton, Alberta, T5J 2P2.

Email address is- glcce@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca
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Just What Is A “Secular Humanist Liberal,” Anyway?

*A brief essay
describing what
liberal secular
humanism is,
stripped of the
rhetoric of the
religious right.*

An essay by Scott Bidstrup

Why This Essay?

Liberal secular humanism has a bad name.

Of that, there's no doubt. And it is the conservative wing of the Christian church, particularly the fundamentalist evangelicals who have damned it endlessly, portraying secular humanist liberals as some sort of devils incarnate. The sort of unkempt people who go around in trenchcoats, molesting little kids in schoolyards, or selling illicit drugs on street corners, or something like that. There's certainly no love lost on them by the evangelical fundamentalists, that's for sure.

But what's the truth? Are they really that bad? And just what is liberal secular humanism, anyway?

Probably the easiest way to understand this phenomenon is to break down the phrase into its individual words, and get a good handle on what each means, and then gain an understanding of what the synergy of the three words together come to mean.

Liberalism

The term, “liberalism” dates from the Enlightenment. In the 15th century, in reaction to the excesses of the church, and the recent scientific discoveries of Galileo and others, and the church's reaction to those discoveries, that certain European intellectuals came to the conclusion that it was increasingly apparent that the Catholic church could no longer justify its claim to perfect knowledge.

Galileo declared that Earth was very unlikely to be the center of the universe, because there were at least two other examples of moons orbiting other planets, which meant they weren't orbiting earth. In fact, they had no relation to Earth at all. This fact came as a great shock

to the Catholic Church, which had claimed that the earth was the center of God's creation. It *had* to be the center of creation, because it was the *object* of God's creative efforts.

Yet here was a man who had shown that any fool with a telescope could see that there were celestial objects out there which had no relation whatever to “God's Earth.” So why had God bothered to create them? What was their meaning?

The Catholic church's answer was to attempt to silence Galileo. But it didn't work. Along with Galileo, there were a flood of other discoveries, the New World, which wasn't mentioned in the Bible at all. And the circumnavigation of Africa, and later the world, which led to discoveries of whole continents of people, whose cultures had no knowledge of Christianity or interest in it. And with the discovery of these cultures, came knowledge that had no relation to Christianity, nor relevance to it, yet had obvious usefulness to humanity.

This flood of scientific discovery overwhelmed the intellectual police of the church. It quickly became obvious that not only did the church not have a monopoly on truth and knowledge, but that natural philosophy, as science was then called, had obvious advantages in its newly discovered ability to describe the world in useful and predictive ways the church never could.

With the new discoveries came the realization that the church had been wrong about a great deal. And if it was wrong about science, that very much begged the question, what else was it wrong about?

That whole civilizations could exist in complete ignorance of Christianity, and establish for themselves value systems that were not only workable, but in many ways more advanced than the value systems of Christianized Europe, came as a great shock to the intellectuals of Europe. Could the church be wrong about value systems as well?

The cruelty and corruption of the Catholic Church hierarchy made it obvious that its value systems were as defective as its world view. Intellectuals rebelled, in some cases establishing new churches to compete with Catholicism, in other cases working to divorce the church from the political power structures it had used so successfully for centuries to control the population.

The view that value systems were possible, even desirable, that were divorced from the Catholic church and its hierarchy, became the basis of a movement that eventually became known as the “Enlightenment.” The value system that evolved from the philosophical ferment of the Enlightenment became known as liberalism. Liberalism became known as the view that the value systems that had existed for centuries couldn't be trusted to be the optimum value systems by which to organize society. In view of the tyranny and corruption of the Catholic Church at the time, it isn't surprising that such a view quickly gained popularity. Liberalism slowly became the intellectual currency of the educated elite of Europe, and by extension, the intellectual elite of the American colonies. When America rebelled against its English monarch, it was this same intellectual elite who sparked the movement, and with its successful conclusion, created a political system based on liberal values. That this was a fundamentally new and unique system is acknowledged in the design of the Great Seal of the United States, on whose obverse the motto, “Novus Ordo Seclorum” means, “to secure a new order” based on these new liberal values.

The opposite view, that value systems that had served society for centuries should not be discarded readily, became known as “conservatism.” It was largely a reaction to the excesses of the new liberal philosophies, and the fact that they were obviously limited in their effectiveness as well. That philosophy of conservatism has evolved over the centuries, becoming a political as well as religious and intellectual philosophy, just as liberalism came to embrace a more secular view of moral philosophy.

Secularism

The obvious failure of the Catholic church, and many of its theological successors to formulate value systems that were fair, humane and at the same time accepted that other views were not

only possible, but had value, caused a reaction that built upon the secular discoveries of natural philosophy.

By the 18th century, the success of science and natural philosophy to address many of the problems of humanity that had not been addressed by the Christian churches, had caused many intellectuals of the day to suggest that perhaps the failures of religion were inherent problems within it.

The view gradually gained currency that value systems and the political systems they were based on, should be based on reason, as reason was clearly addressing human problems more effectively than the church ever did, and eventually the Age of Reason, as it came to be called, even became a political movement. Beginning with the American Revolution, which was largely a reaction to the tyranny justified by the “divine right of kings,” and culminating with the French Revolution of 1789, reason became established as the basis of human law. But the American Revolution failed to address the inequities of the slave trade and the oppression of the indigenous Americans, and the limitations of reason inherent in the French Revolution led to its failure, ending in worse repression than the monarchy it replaced.

By the middle of the 19th century, it had become obvious to intellectuals that while reason was a far superior way of ordering value systems, it nevertheless had limitations. The limitations were acknowledged privately by intellectuals, but publicly, reason seemed to be making serious inroads into the view that religion ultimately had little to offer philosophically. Scientific progress accelerated, and for the educated, religion was having an increasingly hard time holding its philosophical ground.

The trend reached a dramatic climax, when Charles Darwin

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published "The Origin of Species" in the latter third of the 19th century. Finally, science had declared the origin of humanity to be quite natural and without apparent divine purpose.

This was all too much for the religionists. Science and reason had gotten entirely too personal. Increasingly backed into philosophical corners by the inroads of science and the value systems based on reason that science made possible, religionists lashed out.

Darwinism, as religionists referred to the new theory, represented a threat that religionists could not abide. Besides being a personal affront by claiming that man was descended from a common ancestor with the apes, rather than being the object of a loving creation by a divine being, it seemed to attack the very basis of religion itself and



make religion appear to be pointless. If religion was not needed for a workable value system, and could not accurately explain the origins of man and the universe, who needed it? This was a question that at least at a subconscious level, many religionists found to be deeply angering, and against which they lashed out.

The religionists declared the secular philosophies made possible by the synergy of science and reason to be evil. They gave it a name: Secularism. Secularism to the religionist became a rejection of religion and its value systems, and was viewed as the ultimate evil; an expression of the devil incarnate. In order to castigate it to the maximum extent possible, religionists declared secularism to be the obvious result of "Satan's work" in the world. It became anathema; a secularist was a person doing the devil's work.

Humanism

The implications of Darwin's insights were obvious. Man was not the work of a divine creation, but rather the complex result of a simple, long-running, natural process. So to assume that while God didn't create man, the notion that He did establish inviolable value systems by which man was to live, struck a lot of intellectuals as nonsensical on the face of it.

Since God couldn't be asked for comment, it was obvious to the new philosophers that man had to rely on his own devices to establish value systems that are workable and the sound basis for the organization of society. It was becoming increasingly obvious that the role of God in the affairs of man is necessarily circumscribed by the limitations imposed by scientific discovery. And as those circumscriptions become ever tighter, the trend pointed to an obvious conclusion.

That conclusion became clear. Don't look to God for answers. Even if He is there, He's not talking, and so it's becoming increasingly evident that there's no point in resorting to Him for advice.

This theory, which says that the obvious conclusion of the trend of scientific discovery is that God is most likely man's creation, an attempt to know the unknowable, was called "humanism" by those first realized the implications of this insight.

Humanism holds that man has to live by his own devices, because there isn't any reliably divine guidance out there by which to live. Every time we think we've found

evidence of a divine value system, science seems to come along and show us a reason why we're wrong.

So let's give up the pretense; let's get on with becoming philosophically self-reliant, because there isn't any reason to believe that a God is going to hand us the answer any time soon.

Humanism, in the final analysis then, is nothing more than mankind accepting responsibility for his own moral affairs.

The Result: The Dreaded "Secular Humanist Liberal"

So there you have it. That despised being, the "secular humanist liberal." Someone who has recognized the shortcomings of religion, and has accepted the fallibility of reason. Who has accepted responsibility for his own value system. Who understands the frailties of human reason, but who, in spite of human limitations, is willing to forge ahead, and try to make the world a better place for himself and his family and neighbors, based on the best information available to him. Accepting that he won't necessarily get it right on the first try. But someone who also knows he can't necessarily get answers from God either.

Now, was that so bad?

The Ethics Of Liberal Secular Humanism

I believe that one of the reasons secular humanist liberals are castigated so strongly by religionists is that we are stereotyped as not having any moral values or ethical principles. Nothing could be further from the truth

Liberal secular humanism recognizes the vital importance of morality and ethical standards for personal and societal growth and happiness. The notion that liberal secular humanism is amoral is simply untrue

What distinguishes a liberal secular humanist from a religionist in this regard is that the liberal secular humanist believes that these moral standards should be designed rationally, based on proven sociological principles, not on religious belief or supposition, or on the superstitions of previous generations, or the edicts of religious leaders who often interpret what they claim to be the word of God on the basis of their own personal prejudices. Ethics, we believe, should be designed to meet *human* needs, not the demands of some unknowable, abstract being who can't be asked for clarifications of often irrational edicts

To that end, there are several organizations of liberal secular humanist ethicists who have developed detailed moral and ethical value systems. Links to the web pages of these organizations are in the resources below. The reader is invited to read their web pages and explore the ethical and moral systems they have developed. I believe you will find them more comfortable and better suited to your life than the moral systems of the religionists. And it is my belief that they are better suited to the development and well-being of society as well.

If you find yourself noticing that you are one of those despised secular humanist liberals, and would like more information on the philosophical school you didn't know you were a part of, or would like to be involved with others like yourself in the fight against the sadly growing influence of ignorance and superstition, here are some resources to get you started:
(used with permission) Source URL: <http://www.pe.net/~bidstrup/humanist.htm>

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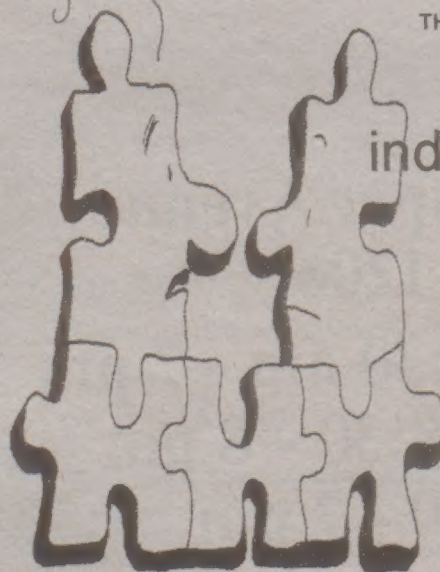
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Thanks for Coming Out...

Continued from page 18

The next day, I had a housewarming party at my new apartment and made one of my specialties, Creole red beans 'n rice, for 25 friends, some of whom I hadn't seen in a while. One of the guests was my good friend J., who had been out of town on a job for several months. He came to hang out with me at the station that night, and afterwards we went out to get some dinner. It was late, so we ended up at the Broadway Deli in Santa Monica. (Eh. It was close, and it was open late.) The meal was all right, but I just enjoyed his company, because it had been so long since I'd seen him. After the meal, while we were waiting for dessert, he said, right out of the blue, "So! I have something I have to tell you." And I knew what he was going to say. He leaned forward a bit. "I'm gay."

I think I left my body at that moment. My mind was somewhere floating in the Twilight Zone, spinning faster than it had ever spun in my life, years of conversations and arguments with myself flashing back in a few minutes time. Apparently my body kept going on autopilot, mouthing congratulations, and I appreciate you telling me, etc. But J. noted later that I looked *VERY* distracted, and that I seemed to be elsewhere. This did really not surprise me. J. had been sending out signals to me, both inadvertently and deliberately, and had himself come out about 10 months before, while he was away. But still, to hear it ... it was, in a way, both delightful and terrifying news, and was both what I expected him to say and the very last thing I expected him to say.

And I began to realize, in those few moments, that I'd never be able to look him in the face again and pretend to be someone that I was not. He had enough faith and value in our friendship to trust me enough to tell me, and I realized that if I didn't tell him then, it would feel like a betrayal. What finally did it, about two minutes after he said The Words, was a very strong and loud voice in my head (my own, I guess), that said, and I quote:

"DON'T BE A SNIVELING FUCKING COWARD!"

And with another little, reedy inner voice, hanging on for dear life, screeching, "NO! Don't! I'm not ready for this!" ... I said, "Um ... well, guess what? ... I am, too." And then I began to shake. Didn't stop shaking for about 20 minutes, either. By the time we had finished talking that night (that poor waitress ... "You guys want some *more* coffee? I had calmed down, and despite my fear, I started to feel really, really, really good.

I got home that night, and there was already a message from J. on my machine. He lives 8 miles further south than me, so he *couldn't* have beaten me home; he

must have pulled over to a phone booth to do this. The message said, "Okay! Calm down! What you did tonight was fantastic. Just take a deeeep breath ... sloooooowly, in ... and out. Now take another one.

It's pretty wonderful to have friends like this. And that night, my life changed utterly. For the first time ever, I felt truly happy and at peace, and it's only gotten better since then. Things so far have gone spectacularly well -- coming out to my siblings and friends has been nothing less than a joy. There were plenty of nervous moments, but it's been getting easier and easier. I still haven't achieved significant-otherhood, and the search is on, but I'm wary of rushing into anything. Weird ... I have to learn how to do this without feeling hopelessly inept; sometimes I feel like I've been dropped onto another planet. I still have to figure out where I fit into All Of This. But things are looking up ... I met someone the other night. The dance has begun. Let's keep our fingers crossed.

It's already gotten to the point where this last year seems to have gone by in a flash, and yet the Days Before seem like they're light years behind me. The closet now looks like a dark and dank cave, deep and foreboding, a poisonous place. I've already had difficulty imagining living my life as it was before. And I've still got a long way to go, and paths to follow both positive and negative -- the prospect of facing and fighting discrimination, but also the beginning of a life of relationships, of finally finding love, and someone with whom I can share my life.

Then ... there are my parents.

I'm facing a positively Apocalyptic coming out to my parents, who are archconservative fundamentalist Catholics (if there is such a thing, they're it). I've got stories to tell, and I think I'm going to need lots of advice. In addition, my mom is incapable of being rational when subjects like this come up, and I fear that this might put her over the edge into the abyss ... to be frank, I wonder if this news will put her in a rubber bedroom.

The problem is, I feel myself growing more and more distant from them for having not told them, and it's only going to get worse. I won't hide my life from them, I won't give them that much control over how I live my life. I love them and want to be closer to them, but I really, really don't know if they (particularly my Mom) can handle it.

If this coming out story helps even one other person, then I guess it's worth it. The list of people that I'd like to thank is long, and I don't want to leave anyone out, so I'll just say thanks to everybody.

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(all reported to be true)

Ambiguous Newspaper Headlines:

Something Went Wrong in Plane Crash says Expert

Police Begin Campaign to Run down Jaywalkers

Safety Experts Say School Bus Passengers Should Be Belted

Drunk Gets Nine Months in Violin Case

Lung Cancer in Women Mushrooms

Clinton Wins in Budget but More Lies Ahead

Enraged Cow Injures Farmer with Axe

Miners Refuse to Work after Death

Juvenile Court to Try Shooting Defendant

250,000 Male Homosexuals said to be Hiding in Alberta

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Two Sisters Re-united after Eighteen Years in Checkout Counter

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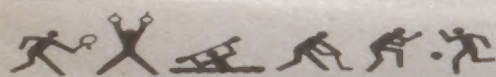
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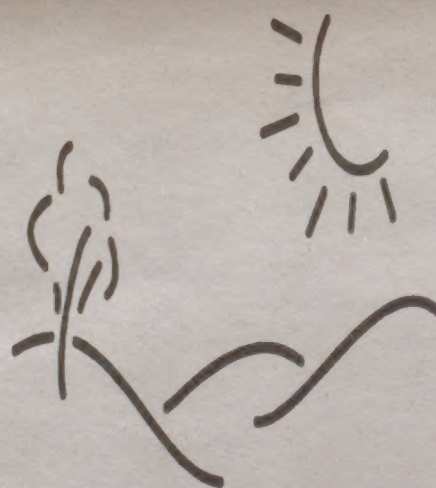
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